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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

# OPINIONS OF THE PUBLIC, SCHOOL TRUSTEES, AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS ON CURRENT EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

by

JOHN FRANCIS BROSSEAU

A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled Opinions of the Public, School Trustees, and Professional Educators on Current Educational Practices submitted by John Francis Brosseau in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## ABSTRACT

The research reported here sought to achieve two objectives. The first objective was to discover public opinion on certain educational issues, and the second was to identify the group of persons, among school trustees and professional educators, who could best predict public opinion as measured by a public opinion poll of education.

In order to achieve these two objectives, two studies were undertaken. Study one consisted of a public opinion poll conducted in the City of Edmonton. The results of this poll were analysed and significant responses determined. Study two was chiefly concerned with an examination of the ability of school trustees and professional educators to predict public opinion. The chief criterion used to test this ability was the accuracy with which they were able to predict the results of the poll undertaken in Study one. Their predictions were analysed on the basis of their job affiliation, life orientation, and biographical characteristics.

A major finding of Study one was that the study provided a measure of public opinion on certain educational issues. Results of this study also gave additional support for the use of the public opinion poll as a gauge of public opinion on educational issues.

Study two demonstrated that school trustees are not better predictors of public opinion than professional educators. In addition, counsellors were found to be significantly better predictors than either teachers or principals. Research findings also indicate

that neither life orientation nor biographical data are positively correlated with ability to predict public opinion. However, it appears that job affiliation has merit as a method of identifying those persons in the field of education who can most accurately predict public opinion.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The present age in the western world is characterized by rapid change in almost every field of human endeavour. The effects which this accelerated pace of change has on individuals is well documented (Toffler, 1970). Education has in no way been immune to this phenomenon. In fact, public education has probably experienced as much change and social unrest as any institution in society. Student unrest, teacher militancy, drug abuse, and school systems in financial difficulty are all examples of the problems being faced in public school education across North America. Knezevich (1969) has noted that "throughout history the social institutions responsible for education of children and youth have been prime targets for criticism during periods of social upheaval (p. 464)." In addition to the social foment in public school education, there is much controversy surrounding specific educational practices. What was formerly accepted as sound pedagogy may no longer be accepted as such. Professional educators are debating the goals of education not only among themselves but also with the public at large. Thus, it is clear that changes have been taking place in opinions held towards education. Since decision makers in education are ultimately responsible to the public, it is important for them to be aware of what the public wants prior to making decisions. In order to do this, decision makers must have the methods available with which to

effectively gauge public opinion.

The rapid change in the character of public school education has an unsettling effect on both the professional educator and the public. This is clearly reflected in the strains which have been placed on the decision making process in education. Pharis (1969) summarized the situation in this manner:

> The structure of educational decision making in the United States is being strained to the breaking point as it comes under attack from several different directions--from teachers, minority groups, students, and political activists of the right and left (p. 52).

Many professional educators believe that, due to their training and expertise, they are in the best position to make decisions on educational matters. However, Gallup (1970) found that both students and adults are beginning to question the judgment of the professional educator. It appears, then, that the public believes that it is entitled to its views on education and to a part of the decision making process since it is paying for educational expenditures and its children are the consumers of the service. A report on the aims and objectives of education (Government of Ontario, 1972) clearly outlined a similar orientation when it stated that "education has come to be seen more as a consumer good designed to serve individual needs, preferences, and choices (p. 1)."

From a legal point of view, it is clear that the decision making power in public school education lies in the hands of the elected school trustees who receive their authority from acts of provincial legislatures (Martin, 1968). Thus, neither professional educators nor the public have a direct method of making binding

educational decisions. However, Enns (1963) maintains that school boards have great freedom to act since school acts generally give them discretionary powers. Consequently, boards are permitted to share their decision making powers with other groups or individuals if they so desire. A report on educational planning (The Government of Alberta, 1972) states that "a Board may delegate any of its powers to the Superintendent of Schools or committee appointed by it (p. 126)." Thus, although the decision making power lies firmly in the hands of a school board, it may choose to involve central office administrators, principals, counsellors, teachers, and the public in sharing this responsibility.

School boards are elected as the trustees of the public's interest in matters of education. Duddridge (1968) states: "As school trustees we are responsible to the people. We act as agents of the public in determining the quality and quantity of education for their children (p. 8)." Similarly, Solomon (1971) also notes: "In any public school system in America, professional personnel are responsible to people in their local districts as they develop and implement school board policies (p. 1)." There should be little doubt that public school education is a trust which the public has assigned to trustees who, in turn, have shared it with professional educators on staff in their school system. It is assumed that a condition of this trust and the sharing of it with professional educators is that both trustees and professional educators will respond to the wishes of the public in educational matters.

The public has asked, and still is asking, whether or not this trust has been broken. Many school boards are aware of the public's concern. In some cases these boards have adopted various practices such as setting up advisory committees comprised of parents or professional educators in order to make themselves more aware of public opinion. Although they are to be complimented for their good faith, the effectiveness of these practices has not been clearly demonstrated. Furthermore, the credibility of the information which these advisory committees supply to school boards is questioned. Since school boards have no way of ascertaining whether the information received from their advisory committees is accurate or not, they frequently choose to ignore the recommendations and make their own decisions.

The purpose of this study is twofold. First, to obtain empirical data on public opinion on educational issues in the City of Edmonton using a public opinion poll. Second, to determine if job affiliation, life orientation, or items of biographical data can be used as a basis to discriminate between accurate and inaccurate estimators of public opinion. The results of the study will be of great practical value to decision makers in education because they will be provided with information concerning who the accurate predictors of public opinion are in a school system.

School trustees are elected by the people and exist to represent their wishes. Until such time as data can be presented to show that alternative perceptions of public opinion are superior

to those of school trustees, they have a moral responsibility to the people who elect them to respond on the basis of their own perceptions of the wishes of the public. In fact, board members are elected presumably because they represent popular positions on issues to the public. One study (Milgram, 1972), however, found evidence to suggest that school trustees are not as atuned to public opinion on educational issues as they are generally given credit for. Thus, Milgram (1972) suggested that further testing should be made of the hypothesis that school trustees are better predictors of public opinion than teachers, principals, and central office administrators.

Why is it so important for educational decision makers to know the opinion of the public on educational issues? Basically, because school financing is under the direct control of the taxpayers. Prior to 1970, school financing in the province of Alberta was not under the direct control of ratepayers. Thus, school boards had the latitude to make decisions which were rather unpopular with the public. There was little the public could do to retaliate other than complain to their local school board. This situation changed abruptly and radically in 1970 when the provincial government introduced a 6 percent limit on school board spending. Under this limitation, a school board could not exceed its previous year's expenditure by more than 6 percent without going to the ratepayers by way of a plebiscite to obtain the public's approval. The 6 percent limitation has been rescinded in Alberta and many persons now believe that a limitation on school board spending is no longer in effect. This belief is

erroneous, however, because a recent School Amendment Act (Government of Alberta, 1973) replaced the 6 percent limitation with a 7.5 percent limitation. Thus, school systems are still responsible to their ratepayers for expenditures beyond the 7.5 percent limitation.

School boards and educators can no longer be complacent about the wishes of the public regarding educational matters. The recent history of school fiscal plebiscites in Canada and the United States has given them little to cheer about. Gallup (1969) reported that:

> budgets and bond issues are being voted down in increasing numbers. The U.S. Office of Education reports that in 1969 school bond issues were voted down at a record rate. By dollar value, voters approved less than 44% of the $3.9 billion in bond issues put to the electorate (p. 100).

Similarly, Keyes (1970) reported that in 1970 seven plebiscites were placed before the electorate of seven British Columbia school boards and all were defeated. Locally in Alberta, two plebiscites have been held and both were defeated.

Various interpretations can be given to explain the high rate of defeats for school plebiscites. However, the critical issue appears to be that school systems must have the support of their public if they are to have the necessary funding to function properly. In order to gain this support, school systems must make decisions that are congruent with the wishes of the public. A prerequisite to making such decisions is ensuring that accurate data on public opinion relative to educational issues are available to decision makers.

A report on educational planning (Government of Alberta,

1972) agrees with the position that the public is not sufficiently listened to by school boards with regard to educational matters. It maintains that the establishment of school advisory committees is an approach which would assist the public in making its wishes known to their school boards. Furthermore, the report states that "the activities proposed for the councils . . . are now handled by central office administrators, principals, and teachers who rarely consult with those affected (p. 127)." The suggestion made by the Government of Alberta is aimed at getting the public more involved in making value judgments and policy development. However, this does not imply that professional educators should not be permitted to make decisions. Rather, professional educators should be free to make all those decisions which lie within the realm of their professional competency and which are within the frame of reference laid down by public policy.

Facione and Swartz (1970), like the report on educational planning (Government of Alberta, 1972), believe that educators must make decisions based on information which is provided to them by the public. Traditionally, this kind of information is obtained at the latest cocktail party or from some unidentified spokesman for the public (Facione and Swartz, 1970). This procedure tends to produce decisions based on information supplied by aggressive, vocal individuals who might in no way be representative of the public. Facione and Swartz believe that the problem can best be solved by a survey of public opinion using an opinion poll. In this way, an accurate

reading of public opinion can be made available, and when a spokesman claims he is speaking for the people, those making the decision will know whether or not that claim is valid (Fenton, 1960).

The report on the aims and objectives of education (Government of Ontario, 1968) along with the report on educational planning (Government of Alberta, 1972), and Facione and Swartz (1970) realize that decision makers in school systems must become more sensitive to the wishes of the public particularly in large units of educational administration. The Government of Ontario proposed in recommendations 198, 210, and 216 of its report that not only the public, but teachers and principals also, be given a greater opportunity to participate in the decision making process of education.

The two government reports suggest structural changes in their public school systems as a solution to the gap that exists between what schools are doing and what the public wishes. Which approach will be most effective is a moot point. However, it is suggested that public opinion polls may be able to make a valuable contribution in terms of narrowing the gap by providing educators with up-to-date information on the wishes of the public. To date, the only empirical basis for measuring public opinion has been a public opinion poll. However, public opinion polls have seldom been conducted on educational matters because they are very time consuming and expensive. Perhaps by comparing the results of a public opinion poll of education with estimates of public opinion made by those responsible for education, new measures of public opinion may be

discovered which are neither as expensive nor as time consuming as the public opinion poll.

One aim of this study is, therefore, to formulate a new measure of public opinion. Basic to this study is a belief in the merit of the view of common man. This belief was influenced significantly by Wilson (1962) and Ranney (1962). Wilson, with regard to the trust of public opinion, stated:

> Two great streams of ideas in the theory of public opinion may be observed. There are those who would trust public opinion because they trust the moral judgments of the common man . . . . Against this position are found mainly those who mistrust the techne, or the art and skill, of the ordinary citizen (p. 37).

The first idea expressed by Wilson is the one accepted for the purpose of this study. It is congruent with a view on the relationship between democratic theory and political decisions made by Ranney (1962) that stated: "No principle, in democratic theory, has been more fundamental than the belief that political decisions ought to be made by the people as a whole in accordance with their desires (p. 572)."

How do these statements apply to school systems? Events of the last few years should leave no doubt in the minds of either the school boards or the professional educational staff that they are a part of a socio-political system to which they must be attentive if they are to survive. Merrill (1955) recognized this fact and has recommended that school boards and professional educators develop a wide range of personal contact in their community in order to be

aware of the political climate.

School systems must develop more effective methods of linking themselves with their public. No longer can they rely solely on informal measurements of the wishes of their public as advocated by Merrill. Rather, they must turn to methods which have been tested and found effective and efficient as measures of public opinion. Gallup (1970) concurs with the position that educators must be keenly aware of what the public's attitude is towards schools. He believes that the public opinion poll is the best instrument to measure the public's view on issues and practices in schools.

Elected school trustees and professional educators alike must make decisions in which they reflect the wishes of the public. Otherwise, they will probably alienate the public which in turn might result in the public failing to give both moral and financial support to the school system. Gallup's view that public opinion polls are the best way to measure public opinion is accepted. However, these polls are time consuming and expensive. Thus, there is merit in seeking alternate methods of measuring public opinion effectively and with greater efficiency than public opinion polls.

School trustees and some groups of educators may be able to assess public opinion more accurately than others. This study will measure job affiliation, life orientation, and certain biographical characteristics of educators and school trustees. These measures will then be analysed to discover whether or not they are useful predictors of public opinion as measured by a public opinion poll.

For example, we may find that school trustees are more accurate predictors of public opinion than professional educators or that persons who score high on a life orientation measure may also be accurate predictors of public opinion. Hopefully, the results of this study will point out which groups are the best predictors of public opinion.

This knowledge should be of considerable value to educators who are continually being called upon to make decisions on short notice. These decisions must reflect the wishes of the public. In many situations it is impossible or at least impractical to conduct a public opinion poll. Therefore, it would be invaluable to be able to consult with those persons in an organization who most accurately perceive the public's opinion. It is within this context that the theoretical basis of this paper will be examined.

## CHAPTER II

## A PHENOMENOLOGICAL THEORY OF PERCEPTION

Public opinion is concerned with the opinions which people express relative to certain issues. These opinions do not develop in a vacuum nor do they operate in a vacuum. In other words, an opinion is to a large degree based on how a person perceives a given phenomenon.

The perception which a person has of an issue is the result of the total interaction of himself and his environment on the phenomenon perceived. Thus, any observed phenomenon is not simply a concrete object. Rather, it is added to or subtracted from by the individual in the course of his perceiving the object. Consequently, public opinion comes under the direct influence of the perceptions. In gaining an understanding of why a person makes a certain decision or acts in a certain manner, it is far more important to know what his perception is than to know what the objective reality (if there is such a thing) is of the phenomenon.

Since public opinion is based on the perceptions which persons have of certain issues, it is important to understand how persons perceive. A phenomenological theory of perception, which is accepted for the purpose of this study, will now be discussed in order to clarify this issue. In addition, a relationship will be established between perception and decision making. That is,

perceptions provide the basic data necessary for the decision making process. Consequently, decisions are contingent upon perceptions. Thus, the perception which a person has of an issue affects his opinion towards the issue. In turn, the opinion which he holds affects the decision made and, consequently, his behaviour. Similarly, persons in decision making positions have a perception of public opinion which no doubt influences their decisions.

Philosophers have argued at great length about the nature of reality. One issue with which they have been particularly concerned is the matter of the essence of an object as opposed to its existence. Essence refers to what an object is intrinsically made of; whereas existence refers to the act by which it comes about and is. To the existentialists Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Sartre, the issue is rather clear cut as they believe that essence only follows existence and is a process of constant becoming. Jean Paul Sartre's dictum that "existence precedes essence" is probably as trite an expression of the foundation of existentialism as there is. To the existentialist, reality is the world of existing. An object can be carefully and scientifically described, but in order to know it genuinely it must be met personally, experienced, and become involved with. Thus, the external world and the internal world of the mind exist in unity in the world of the mind. Truth can be discovered only in our own feelings. May (1969) has stated that "there is no such thing as truth or reality for a living human being except as he participates in it, is conscious of it, has some relationship to it (p. 13)."

Man is the only meaning in a meaningless world, for it is he who creates order in the universe. Essence, therefore, is only what man has made for himself.

The existential position is a relatively new one in philosophical and psychological thought. It is only in the last half century that it has become widely accepted. May (1969) maintains that the delay was due to the fact that "traditionally in Western Culture, existence has been set over against essence the latter being to emphasize upon immutable principles, truth, logical laws, and so forth that are assumed to stand above and beyond any given existence (p. 12)." On the other hand, Van Kaam (1966) believed that the delay in adopting an existential position was caused by a rigid adherence to scientific procedures: "For human sciences will never present us with a full understanding of man so long as they are pure speculative knowledge or mere laboratory knowledge without reference to the real, lived world of man (p. 11)." The rigid position of science which Van Kaam spoke of was to a marked degree due to the recognition by physical scientists of the nature of perception. They realized that there were many factors influencing perception and that the perception of an object was much more than a photographic reproduction of the object.

In order to control variations due to the influence of perception, scientists sought to develop objective methods of observation. Allport (1955) viewed this search for objectivity in this way: "We shall consider objectivity to be this effort to reduce to the

minimum influence of the observer's own activity upon the description of what is observed (p. 18)." This attempt to achieve maximum objectivity undoubtedly has merit in the physical sciences. However, psychologists face a somewhat different problem due to the fact that they must take into account human perceptions as they are. Allport (1955) has stated that:

> though physicalistic experience and the criteria of objectivity give the best answer to the questions about objects as parts of the physical world, they are not good ways of answering the question of how objects appear as dependent upon the perceiving organism (p. 37).

Van Kaam (1966) agrees. He said that:

> the methods of physics undoubtedly disclose certain measurable properties of human behavior but beyond this they conceal more than they reveal. Unfortunately, the imperialism of the physical method may even cut human science off from relevant human behavior as it is revealed in the spontaneous, experiential mode of existence (p. 14).

Thus, we see a dichotomy developing between those who wish to measure things from an empirical basis and those who wish to measure them from an appearance basis. This dichotomy, however, is not necessarily the outcome of accepting a phenomenological approach in psychology, that is, an approach that emphasizes perception from an individual's frame of reference. Perhaps a better way of expressing this situation is that we must begin with the phenomena and then apply empirical measures. Van Kaam and Allport are critical of those empiricists who decide a priori the nature of the phenomena so as to make them fit the method.

Physical scientists frequently denounce the interference

which our senses have upon objective reality. They spend a great deal of time and energy attempting to obtain objective measures. Straus (1966) summarizes the antithesis to their position when he states:

> Senses and sensory experience belong to the greatest gifts nature has bestowed on man and animals. Through the senses the gates to the world are opened to us. Sensory experience has been disparaged, condemned as deceptive, belittled as a hodgepodge of confused ideas, discredited as a mirage, listed as a liability rather than an asset (Preface X).

Since we are concerned here with the psychology of man rather than with physics, it is appropriate to take an approach which is closely related to man's perception of the world, the world as he sees it. Kuenzli (1959) describes this as perception "from the point of view of the behaving organism itself (p. 5)." There is a story which is frequently told that exemplifies this concept of perception: "Two blind men who know nothing about elephants are led to an elephant. One is given the opportunity to touch the elephant's leg while the other its trunk. They are then asked to describe what an elephant is like. One responds that it is like a snake, while the other responds that it is like a tree." The perceptions which these men have of the elephant are very different from that which is generally accepted as the objective reality of the elephant. Bartley (1958) expresses this difference in perception in his statement that "any experiences reported upon as to how they 'appear' as in contrast to how they 'are' are called phenomenological (p. ;3)." The behaviour which these two men exhibited towards the elephant is based on their perception of

elephant and not on its objective reality.

In general, it is phenomenological perception which determines behaviour towards a perceived object or thing. Thus, behaviour is determined more by our phenomenological perceptions than by objective reality or essence. Lyons (1963) outlined this concept clearly when he stated that "the phenomenologist assumes from the start that the person's world is his own and that it is all the world he can ever know; that he is inseparable in it, . . . even if he is an empiricist in psychology, that lives in it (p. 57)."

Phenomenology means many things to many people. It is not a single entity which is described in its entirety by any one authority but rather its definition and conceptualization vary. Husserl is generally accepted as the father of the phenomenological movement. However, Kockelmans (1967) expressed the view that there are few psychologists who accept Husserl's position without major modification. In fact, many psychologists speak about phenomenology without ever clearly outlining their definition of it, which greatly adds to the confusion. Kockelmans described Husserl's view of phenomenology in the following manner:

> Husserl's own interpretation is rooted in the conviction that a consistent phenomenology must turn its back on every established theory, on all traditional, prejudiced, and metaphysical views in order to gain access to pure and primordial experience in which things themselves appear to us in a genuinely original way (p. 317).

Heidigger, one of the founders of existential philosophy of this century (Barrett, 1958) and a phenomenologist, along with most

contemporary phenomenologists, reject Husserl's position as they believe that it is circuitous and never permits one to come to grips with the issue. Kockelmans (1967) outlined this by stating: "In the development of an empirical psychology based on phenomenological insights our first task is to study the empirical basis of this science and to free it of all pseudo-philosophical prejudices . . . (p. 333)." Kockelmans also summarized the contemporary definition which is acceptable to many psychologists such as Lewin, Maslow, and Rogers:

> Phenomenology then is the study of phenomena, not of facts. Phenomena is that which announces itself to us; its reality is precisely its spontaneous appearance. This spontaneous appearance itself must be questioned and described as it appears. It does not hide or represent any deeper reality (p. 339).

This definition is the foundation of a phenomenological approach to explaining perception. This, in turn, provides a basis for an interpretation of the decision making process.

Man is continually in a state of adapting his behaviour to meet the requirements of his environment. Consequently, the process by which he extracts certain cues from his total environment to react to it is the process of perception. In other words, the process of perception is the process of information extraction. According to Fogus (1966), perception is the critical process which precedes the acquisition of knowledge, that is, learning and thinking.

Like Fogus, Fieandt (1966) does not believe that perception is simply a matter of recording stimuli. Perception, to him, also

has an autonomous generative portion which lies within the organism. Thus, everyone creates his own perceptual world. Allport (1955) aptly summarized the views of Fogus and Fieandt in his definition of perception:

> A phenomenological experience of an object, that is to say, the way some object or situation appears to the subject, is dependent upon his own organism, as observer-involved, non-denotative, and 'private', is called a percept (p. 23).

Perception, therefore, is how things appear to the person perceiving them.

Rogers (1951) maintains that perception is the control factor determining behaviour. "The organism," he says, "reacts to the field as it is experienced and perceived. This perceptual field is, for the individual, reality (p. 484)." It is most important, therefore, to try and see the world from the internal frame of reference of the individual if we are to really understand his behaviour. Maslow (1969) concurred with Rogers when he stated that the "best way of understanding another human being, at least a way necessary for some purposes, is to get into his Weltanschauung and to be able to see the world through his eyes (p. 54)."

Ittelson and Cantril (1954) proposed a transactional approach to perception. This approach has a phenomenological base and provides a link between perception and decision making. According to these authors, the three major characteristics of perception are:

1. Perception can be studied only in terms of transactions, that is, concrete individuals dealing with concrete situations.

2. Perception comes into transaction from the unique personal behaviour centre of the perceiver.

3. Perception occurs as the perceiver creates his own psychological environment by identifying certain aspects of his own existence to an environment which he believes exists independent of his own externalization (p. 3).

Griffiths (1959) summarized the theoretical basis for this study when he maintained that Ittelson and Cantril's approach explained why individuals can perceive the same situation differently and why in turn they can believe that what they perceive is real. On the basis of his perception the individual makes his decision and acts accordingly.

# CHAPTER III

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Introduction

This chapter concerns itself with a review of three major topics, namely, opinion polls, Frommian psychology, and decision making. The purpose is three-fold: first, to provide the reader with a general understanding of public opinion polls and to establish their reliability and validity as measures of public opinion; second, to provide a review of Frommian psychology in as much as it advocates a generative theory of perception which is phenomenological in nature and congruent with the theoretical basis of this study. Specifically, Fromm believes that one's life orientation has a marked effect on one's perceptions; third, to point out how decision making is the link between perception and behaviour. That is to say, decisions are made on the basis of the perceptions which one has of a situation. Situations are not perceived constantly by all persons but rather perceptions vary depending upon the orientation of the perceiver. Thus, factors such as job affiliation, life orientation and biographical data may have a relationship with one's perceptions and, consequently, on the decision one makes.

### Public Opinion Polls

It was not until the 1930s that the use and value of public

opinion polls were perceived and polls were put to use by both business and government. Men such as George Gallup and Elmo Roper were the pioneers of this procedure. The Roper Poll was a regular feature in Fortune Magazine after 1935 (Wallace, 1959). Today, the Gallup Poll is probably the best known. Its first release was made in 1935, and it has been a great success ever since.

Although Gallup popularized the public opinion poll concept, he was certainly not the first person to grasp the concept (Paulmer, 1953). Paulmer maintained that as far back as Aristotle the value of the political competence of the masses was given recognition. Rousseau, however, was the scholar who most clearly formalized the concept and coined the phrase 'public opinion' (l'opinion publique).

During the eighteenth century, public opinion became an important social and political issue to the holders of power. Hennessey (1965) maintained that this change occurred because of the equalitarian views expressed by Locke, Rousseau, and Jefferson and the widened base of political power. Prior to this time, public opinion, although recognized in both early Rome and Greece, was not very important since the public had no effective way of making its opinions known or influencing policy. Hennessey explained the rise in importance of public opinion in this way:

> The emphasis on political equality and individualism, coupled with the perhaps more important and economic changes of the eighteenth century, meant that a growing part of the hitherto voiceless public would be able to influence government policy; and when the public begins to influence policy, it becomes important to know what the public thinks (p. 96).

Similarly, Childs (1965) believes that the spread of education, uni-

versal suffrage, and mass media were all major influences which increased the importance of public opinion.

The importance of public opinion is clearly illustrated by the electoral process present in North American society. Elections are a reflection of the wishes of the people and the machinery by which government representatives are elected (Childs, 1965). An electoral system has one major drawback, however. It is too expensive and cumbersome to use very frequently. Thus, instead of having a general election or plebiscite on every issue, a poll may be used. Polls obtain a measure of public opinion from a sample of the public, be it on an issue of government policy or consumer demand.

A great deal of controversy surrounded public opinion polls in 1936 and their value was being seriously questioned. The Literary Digest had conducted polls for a number of years prior to 1936 and, on the basis of its past performance, had achieved substantial credibility in the eyes of the public. Prior to the 1936 presidential election in the United States, the Literary Digest Poll predicted that Roosevelt would be defeated by Landon. Gallup, on the other hand, conducted his own poll and made the opposite prediction. As it turned out, the election was a landslide victory for Roosevelt. Some persons no doubt concluded that, on the basis of the Literary Digest Poll fiasco, public opinion polls were not good measures of public opinion. Albig (1956), on the other hand, pointed out that the Literary Digest Poll was a clear example of the necessity to draw samples for public opinion polls on a random basis. The sample which

the Literary Digest used was drawn from a list of automobile owners and telephone owners. In 1936, this represented a highly biased sample and certainly affected the results of the poll.

The popularity of public opinion polls (Christensen, 1962) appears to be highly related to their ability to predict American presidential elections. Although there is much controversy over the issue, it appears that public opinion polls first came into widespread acceptance after George Gallup predicted Roosevelt's victory in 1936. However, polls fell into some disrepute when a Gallup Poll predicted incorrectly that Dewey would win the 1948 election. Ever since this last error, the Gallup Poll has been most accurate in predicting presidential elections. Hennessey (1965) noted that in the presidential and congressional elections held between 1950 and 1960, the Gallup Poll has averaged an error of less than one percent. Despite the attention which the Gallup Poll has received from its election forecasts, Gallup believes that this is one of the least productive applications of the technique. Gallup believes that the real value of polls lies in the area of social, economic, and political issues (Christensen, 1962).

Decision makers and the general public appear to accept the wider applications of public opinion polls suggested by Gallup. This has probably been due to a large part to the refinement of the procedures used in public opinion polls. These improvements in polling techniques make it possible to use polls in a wide variety of applications with a high degree of certainty as to the validty of results.

There appears to be increased faith in public opinion polls on the part of the public as well as decision makers. This has occurred probably because of refinement in procedures which are used in conducting polls. All public opinion polls which are properly conducted generally follow the following procedure (Hennessey, 1965):

1. A statement of the information desired.
2. Identification of the population from which the sample will be drawn.
3. Selecting the sample size and how it will be drawn.
4. Constructing a questionnaire.
5. Obtaining and training interviewers.
6. Conducting the actual poll.
7. Processing the data and analysis of the data.

Of particular importance in conducting public opinion polls is the sampling procedure followed. All public opinion surveys must strive to see that their samples are properly drawn. Newcomb (1965) maintained that:

> the sample drawn must be such that every person in the population has the same chance of being selected in the sample. Any hidden defect in the sample that in actuality raises the probability that certain people or certain types of people get into the sample relative to others leads to sample bias and means that the expectations based on sampling theory are no longer valid for this sample (p. 543).

Basically, there are three techniques which are used to gather a random sample for the purpose of a public opinion poll (Newcomb, 1965). These techniques are: 1) Systematic sampling, used

when all names in a known population are available; 2) Quota sampling, used when all names are not known so as to estimate the number of people in each subgroup; 3) Area sampling, as used by Gallup to measure populations which are difficult to define other than by geographical area.

Apart from sampling procedure, refinements have been made in the interview techniques used. Basically, what is sought in an interview is a situation in which the respondent freely expresses his sentiments on the question in point (Newcomb, 1965). Greenspoon (1965) and Brown (1956) were able to demonstrate how an interviewer could bias the responses of a respondent in a public opinion survey. Thus, it is important to use interviewers who are as impartial as possible to the poll being conducted, and that they be aware of subtle ways in which they can influence the respondent.

Another important variable which must be dealt with in a public opinion poll is the actual questions to be asked (Maccoby and Holt, 1962). These must be carefully checked and validated to make sure that they are eliciting the types of responses that are being sought. Generally, it is better to use a forced-choice question rather than an open-ended question as the latter tends to increase the response rate (Erdos, 1970). This is also advocated by Shapiro (1970) who believes that open-ended questions tend to increase the amount of social interaction between the interviewer and the respondent, thus increasing the possibility of interviewer bias influencing the response given.

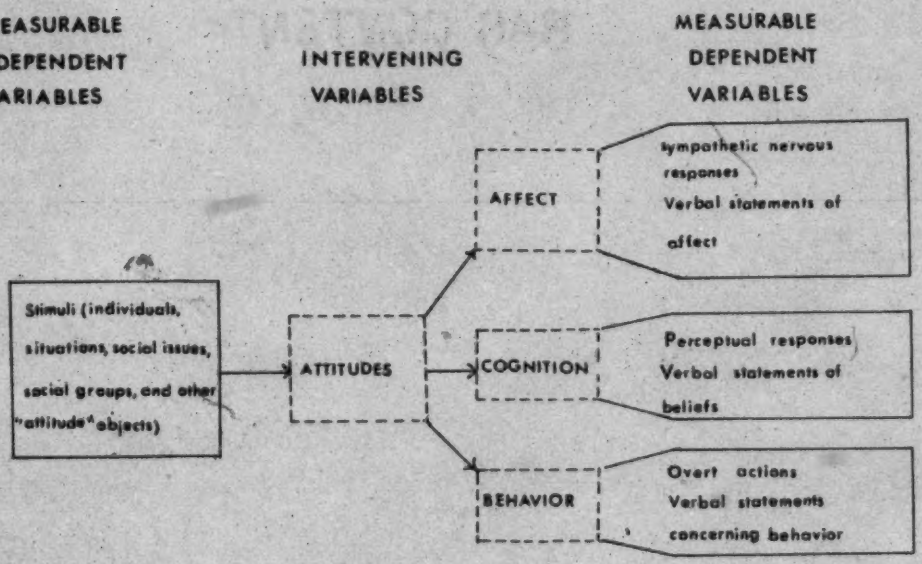
Erdos (1970) states that there are three major categories of polls. He established these categories on the basis of the data-gathering procedure used. The three types of polls are person-interview polls, telephone surveys, and mail order surveys.

The preceding description of the techniques used in public opinion polls demonstrates that certain methods are common to all public opinion polls. However, depending upon the nature of the study various methods may be selected to draw the sample and gather the data. Of prime importance in these latter considerations is the amount of funds available and the degree of precision desired. All public opinion polls must operate within the limitations imposed by money, time, and accuracy. Therefore, when designing a public opinion poll a decision must be made as to how comprehensive it will be.

Some confusion and much misunderstanding exist concerning the meaning of the term 'public opinion'. In order to clarify the concept, it is necessary first to define 'opinion' and then to distinguish it from 'attitude'. Hovland and Rosenberg (1960) refer to attitude as an intervening variable occurring between a measurable stimulus and a response that may take the measurable form of affect, cognition, or behaviour (see Figure 1). An opinion, according to Rosenberg (1960), is a measurable cognition. It is distinct from an attitude which is an intervening variable that is difficult to measure. Similarly, Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1953) defined opinions as "verbal 'answers' that an individual gives in response to stimulus situations in which some general question is raised

Figure 1

# SCHEMATIC CONCEPTION OF ATTITUDES




Source: Hovland and Rosenberg, 1960

(p. 6)." Thus, it is clear that opinions are verbalizations, whereas attitudes refer to an intervening variable which may be unconscious (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, 1953).

How, then, does public opinion differ from opinion? The critical difference is that public opinion refers to the aggregate opinion of a group of individuals who comprise a public. Allport (1937) declared that:

> the term public opinion is given its meaning with reference to a multi-individual situation in which individuals are expressing themselves, or can be called on to express themselves, as favoring or supporting (or else disfavoring or opposing) some definite condition, person, or proposal of widespread importance (p. 23).

Allport's definition is an accurate description of that which most current public opinion polls are seeking to measure. However, Allport's definition fails to deal with the temporary nature of public opinion. Christiansen (1959), in speaking of public opinion, emphasized its temporary character and noted that public opinion was generally concerned with concrete and current issues.

The foregoing discussion has provided an outline of the historical development of public opinion polls, the methods used by them, and a précis definition of public opinion. How, then, do these factors relate to education? More specifically, how do they relate to this study?

Until recently, public opinion polls were rather foreign to education. Granted, the Harris and Gallup polls frequently included items on education (McMahon, 1967). However, these polls were not specifically devoted to educational matters. Many public opinion

polls which have been conducted in education have been very limited in scope, being restricted to issues such as counselling services (Hinko, 1971), sex education (Juhasz, 1971), and merit pay (NEA Research Division, 1971). There has been a great interest in public opinion polls in education since the late 1960s. This interest was probably fostered in part by the crises which many school systems faced--crises arising from a lack of funds and a public which had become alienated from the schools. However, the three Gallup polls reported in the Phi Delta Kappan journal (Gallup 1970, 1971, 1972) probably had more influence in creating an interest in applying public opinion polls to education than any other single factor. Two polls have also recently been conducted in Canada, and this is indicative of the increased attention and value given to gathering information using this technique. These two polls were conducted by the Government of Ontario Department of Education (1972) and the Etobicoke School District of Ontario (Londerville, 1972).

Ever since the fiasco of the Literary Digest Poll of 1936, public opinion polls have demonstrated that they can obtain an empirical measure of public opinion. Much research has been done on public opinion polls. Consequently, specific techniques have been developed which have improved their reliability and validity. Furthermore, the Gallup Poll appears to be more able to predict election results year by year. The increased use of the public opinion poll in education demonstrates that it not only has a role in predicting election results but also in measuring public opinion

on social and educational issues, which was the main value which Gallup saw for them.

The foregoing section has provided evidence to support the view that public opinion polls can be accurate measures of public opinion. Consequently, it was decided that an accurate measure of public opinion on certain educational issues in the City of Edmonton could be obtained by using a public opinion poll.

## Frommian Psychology[1]

Fromm (1967) recognized that there are two main ways which man may use to perceive his world. He stated that:

> the world outside oneself can be experienced in two ways: reproductively by perceiving actuality in the same fashion as film makes a literal record of things photographed (although even mere reproductive perception requires the active participation of the mind); and generatively by conceiving it, by enlivening and re-creating this new material through the spontaneous activity of one's own mental and emotional powers (p. 95).

It is clear that generative perception is superior in developing an interactive perception of one's environment, a perception which emphasizes the interaction between the self and the environment in an ongoing developmental fashion. Furthermore, it is of great assistance in helping to explain decision making and behaviour.

Fromm, like Ittelson (1954) and Griffiths (1959), believes that we can best explain man's behaviour by an interactional process.

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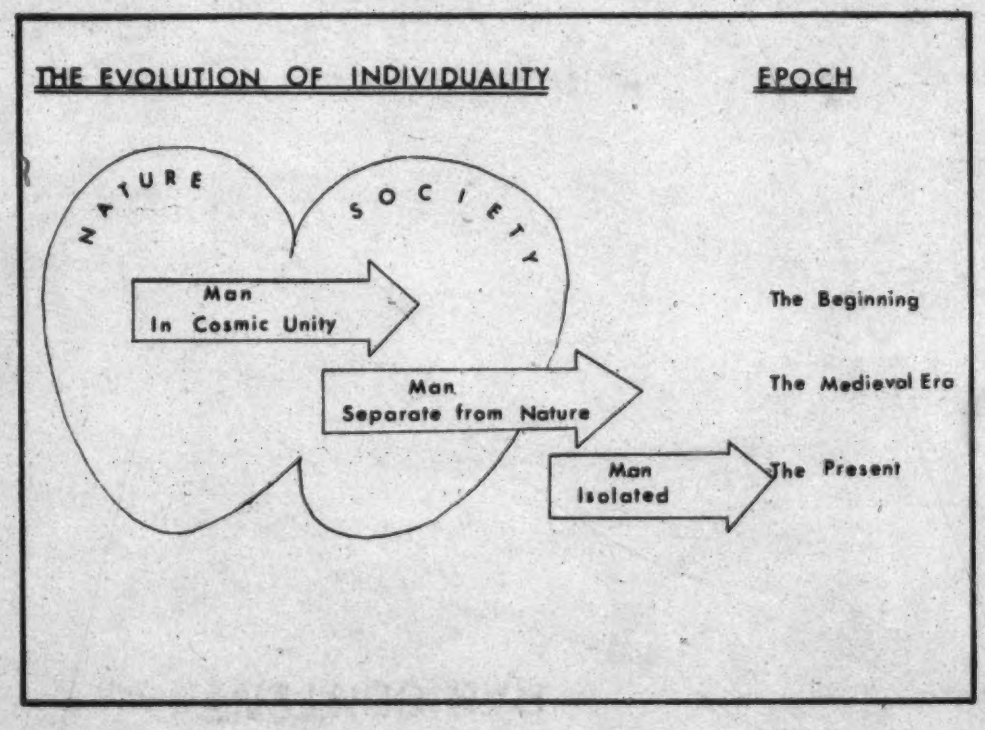
[1] Readers interested in a more detailed discussion of Frommian psychology are referred to E. Fox. "A Life Orientation Scale." Unpub. Doct. Diss., The University of Alberta, 1969.

In other words, by looking at man as he affects society and how he, in turn, is affected by society, we can come to understand man. Fromm rejected the unitary explanation of Marx who believed that the individual could be completely understood on the basis of the social influence he experiences. Equally, Fromm rejected Freud's position that it is man's individual personality which acts upon and causes sociological phenomenon. Not only does Fromm see man involved in an interaction of the influence of his personality and the society in which he lives, but he also sees that this interaction is an ongoing one. It is a state of continual interaction, change, and development. It is a process as much as an object. Primitive man was in close contact with his environment and felt that he was an integral part of it. In his daily existence he saw direct evidence of how he affected his environment and how he, in turn, was affected by it. As societies developed and became more complex, man became more removed from these direct experiences and lost this direct communication with his environment. Consequently, he felt more alienated from his environment and saw himself increasingly as an entity unto himself, not as part of his environment. This development is explained diagramatically by Fox (see Figure 2).

Fromm also believes that man has two basic ways of relating to society. He referred to these two ways as necrophilous orientation and biophilous orientation. Both orientations are found in normal man and are not viewed by Fromm as labels for psychopathology. He regards the necrophilous orientation as being non-productive, but

Figure 2

# THE FROMMIAN PROCESS OF HISTORY




Source: Fox, 1969

views the biophilous orientation as being productive. This concept of character is shown in Figure 3.

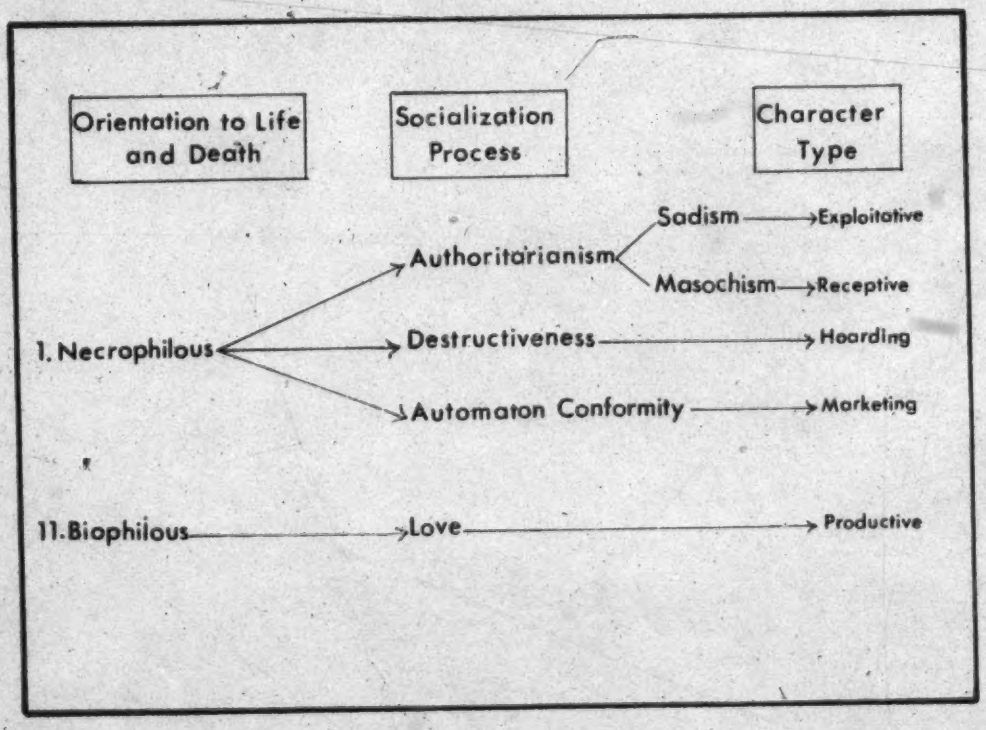
The necrophilous, death orientation, refers to a non-productive interaction with one's environment. Here, the emphasis is on the socialization process of authoritarianism, destructiveness, and automaton conformity. The socialization processes in turn manifest themselves in exploitative, receptive, hoarding, and marketing character types. Sadism and masochism are merely two sides of authoritarianism--the active and the passive.

The biophilous life orientation refers to a productive interactive relationship with one's environment. It emphasizes love and understanding and, consequently, the person becomes more sensitive and observing. Thus, the suggestion is that the biophilous person is more sensitive to others than the necrophilous person. Therefore, the biophilous person should be a good predictor of public opinion.

The biophilous orientation is in some ways similar to the concept of empathy. Empathy, according to Rogers (1951) refers to the ability to perceive another person's frame of reference. That is, the ability of one person to perceive another's phenomenological world. The literature in the area of counsellor education is continually exhorting the importance of instilling in counsellors the ability to be empathetic. Rogers (1951) believes that empathy is one of the core conditions which must be present in an effective counsellor. Similarly, Carkhuff (1967) and Bergin (1963) have found that

Figure3

# THE FROMMIAN GENESIS OF CHARACTER




Source: Fromm, 1965

empathy on the part of the counsellor is an important factor which assists clients in gaining benefit from counselling. It follows that counsellors, as a group, should be very sensitive to the wishes and aspirations of others. Therefore, they should be more aware of what public opinion is than other groups of professional educators.

Some studies have examined personality variables associated with groups of professional educators. Merrill (1960), for example, found that teachers were not motivated by a strong interest in social services. Newsome and Gentry (1963) found that school superintendents were far more authoritarian than college teachers. Thus, there appears to be personality differences present among groups of professional educators. One of the questions with which this study is concerned is whether or not these groups of educators differ in life orientation. If so, is life orientation correlated with their ability to predict public opinion?

If it can be shown that one group involved with educational matters, either school trustees or a group of professional educators, is better able to predict public opinion than another group, then this information will be of great practical importance to the decision making process in a school system. The group that is the best predictor of public opinion should be involved in making those decisions which need to be as congruent as possible with public opinion. Matthews (1967) believes that the importance of the decision making processes in school systems cannot be over-emphasized as it affects every aspect of a school system's operation. In view of the impor-

tance of decision making, an investigation of its relationship to perception is warranted.

## Decision Making

There have been differences of opinion as to what constitutes the main components of decision making. Barnard (1938) held a rather simple view of decision making in that he viewed a decision as a choice made between alternatives after careful thought and calculation. MacGregor (1960), on the other hand, believed that all decisions in management were based on certain assumptions about human nature and human behaviour. Both of these views are rather restricted and fail to account for the major influence that perception has on decision making. Alternate views of decision making advanced by Griffiths (1959), March and Simon (1958), and Simon (1957) are more inclusive and stress the importance of perception in decision making.

Griffiths developed a complex and rather extensive approach to decision making. His model consisted of six steps which were all part of the decision making process. These six steps are:

1. Recognize, define, and limit the problem.
2. Analyse and evaluate the problem.
3. Establish criteria of judgment.
4. Collect data.
5. Select preferred alternatives.
6. Program, control, and evaluate the solution (p. 94).

These steps may give some persons the impression that Griffiths used a highly rational approach to decision making. On the contrary, his main emphasis was on the effect that variations in perception among persons have upon decision making. Similarly, March (1958) believed

that:

> the propensity of individuals to see those things that are consistent with their established frame of reference is well established in individual psychology. Perceptions that are discordant with the frame of reference are filtered out before they reach consciousness, or are reinterpreted or 'rationalized' so as to remove the discrepancy (p. 152).

Simon (1957) also accepted a position that allowed for the influence of factors other than deliberate rational thought in decision making. As a phenomenologist, he emphasized the effect of one's total psychological environment upon one's decisions. He regarded decision making as more similar to a stimulus-response pattern than to a rational choice between various alternatives. Thus, the choice which a person makes is based upon his model of the real situation (March, 1958). The model which a person has is the product of the psychological and sociological activity on the part of the chooser and others in his environment. Consequently, decision making and, in particular, human rationality operate within the limits of the pscho-logical environment in which perceptions occur.

The foregoing description of perception and its influence on decision making is similar to Fromm's (1967) in which perception is viewed as a generative function rather than simply a reproductive function. Decision making is not a process that is limited to individuals. It also takes place in groups. However, it is difficult to distinguish between individual and group decision making, as both are closely related and interwoven processes. Feldman and Kanter (1965) believed that all group decisions were heavily influenced by the action of individuals. Similarly, groups have a reciprocal effect

upon the decisions which individuals make. Simon (1957) also recognized the similarities between group and individual decision making. He proposed that what was true of individual decision making was also true of groups. In other words, groups make decisions not only on the basis of their cognitive knowledge, but also on the basis of their needs even though the intent of decision making is to maximize the input of intellect. This explanation of decision making is congruent with the writings of Dill (1962), Etzioni (1964), Feldman and Kanter (1965), and Hemphill (1958).

A frequent debate in the area of decision making revolves about the question: "Who can make the best decision--a group or an individual?" Costello and Zalkind (1963) believed that a group decision making procedure was superior to an individual decision making procedure as it had a broader base of knowledge. Furthermore, they believed that by using group decisions there would be less chance of error.

Similarly, Janis (1971) and Hall (1971) found that the group was more capable of good decision making than any individual working alone. Hall claimed that "the group's effort is almost always an improvement over its average individual resource, and it is better than even the best individual contribution (p. 51)."

At the local school system level in Alberta, the authority to make decisions lies firmly in the hands of the school board. This authority is clearly spelled out in the Alberta School Act (Government of Alberta, 1970). The degree to which school boards have shared

the decision making process with their professional educators and the general public is unknown. However, if one were to believe the reports of the media, it is clear that the public is less than happy with current practices in education.

Ramsay (1971) believes that the current financial crisis in education will be resolved only when the public is convinced of the merit of the educational system. Until such time, other spending programmes will receive financial priority. The objective of those responsible for education who are concerned about the current state of alienation with the public, would appear to be to restore the faith of ratepayers in the educational system. In order to achieve this, professional educators and school trustees must become more involved, and improve communication with their communities, as well as develop programmes and services according to the wishes of their ratepayers (Robinson, 1971). Thus, it would appear that school boards should consider changing their decision making procedures, if they have not already done so, in order to permit more persons to participate in the decision making process. By striving to obtain maximum participation in decision making by all concerned, better decisions will be made and those making decisions will feel more closely identified with the organization. Schmuck and Blumberg (1969) maintain that "participative decision making processes in organizations seem to make for much productive problem-solving and enhanced sense of satisfaction and organization identity on the part of members (p. 104)."

Special consideration should be given by school boards to ways in which the general public could participate more actively in decision making. Such ways include public opinion polls (Lahoda, 1971) and school councils (Government of Alberta, 1972). Furthermore, consideration should be given to involving the professional educators of a school system to a greater degree. Professional educators may be able to assist school boards in gauging public opinion with regard to certain contemplated decisions.

# CHAPTER IV

## PROCEDURES AND DESIGN

### THE SAMPLES

#### The Sample for Study One

Subjects for this sample were selected at random from the population, age eighteen and over, living in private households (that is, excluding those in hospitals, hotels, and institutions) within the 1973 corporate limits of the City of Edmonton, Alberta. The sample was drawn from the City of Edmonton Telephone Directory. Although there has been much controversy in the past concerning the suitability of this procedure, most of the objections to it are no longer valid as the vast majority of the population in urban centres have telephones. As further proof of this statement, the project director contacted the manager of Edmonton Telephones and received written confirmation that fewer than five percent of the residences in the city did not have telephones, and that the figure was probably closer to two percent in his estimate.

A more complete listing of residences could perhaps have been obtained from the City of Edmonton Utilities Directory. However, this presented several problems since this list is computerized and inaccessible in terms of both security checks and cost. In order to obtain access to the Utilities Directory, clearance would have had to

be obtained from a City of Edmonton Commissioner and the Manager of the Utilities Department. Moreover, the cost of getting a random sample of 400 addresses was estimated at $300.00. Since no funds were available for this study, the cost was excessive. Furthermore, persons seeking to replicate this study would have great difficulty in gaining access to the Utilities Directory.

Since the City of Edmonton Telephones Directory does not include unlisted telephones, a second contact was made with Edmonton Telephones to see if a directory of unlisted telephones could be made available. The project director was informed that unlisted telephone numbers are under tight security and are not released. Therefore, the absence of those persons who reside in a household where there is an unlisted telephone is a possible source of bias in Sample One. However, only five percent of the telephones in Edmonton are unlisted. Moreover, Lenthold and Scheele (1971), in a study comparing the demographic characteristics of persons with unlisted telephones to those with listed telephones, found no significant difference between the two groups on variables such as income and occupation. In view of the small percentage of persons having unlisted telephones and the apparent lack of difference in characteristics between persons who have unlisted telephones and those whose telephones are listed, it would seem justifiable to assume that the exclusion of the former group from the Edmonton Poll of Education (EPE) would not significantly alter the results of the Poll. A summary of biographical data on the respondents suggests that the sample is indeed representative of

residents of Edmonton (see Appendix D).

The following procedure was used to draw the random sample of 400 addresses from the City of Edmonton Telephone Directory. The number of pages containing residential addresses was calculated and the actual page numbers which could be used were identified. Then, a maximum number of possible addresses per page was determined. This information was used to obtain a computer printout of 400 random page numbers out of 452 pages. In addition, each page number was accompanied by a random number from 1 to 396 which represented the total number of possible listing positions per page. The page numbers and their listing positions were then used to select the sample. A listing position was determined by sequentially counting all possible address positions until the given position was identified. In the event that a selected listing position address was a business address or an address outside of the corporate limits of the City of Edmonton, the next residential address following the selected listing position address was selected. In the event that a position address could not be found on a given page, counting was continued on to the next page until the predetermined listing position was located.

Following the selection of addresses, actual locations were plotted on a map of the city and 20 addresses in each zone were delimited. This was done in order to minimize travel time of the interviewers. A second plotting was then made of all addresses in each zone on a separate map for each zone. This map was then given to the interviewer responsible for that zone in order to help him find the

location of the residence at which the interview was to take place.

Sample for Study Two

Subjects for this sample were selected from the professional educators and school trustees responsible for education in Edmonton Public School System and the Edmonton Catholic School System. All school trustees, central office personnel at the level of director or above, principals, and counsellors were selected, as well as a random sample of teachers. A ratio of 3:7 was used in selecting the random sample of teachers from the Edmonton Catholic School System and the Edmonton Public School System. This procedure is referred to as proportional allocation (Stephan and McCarthy, 1958), and was used because it takes into account the relative differences between the number of teachers in the Edmonton Public School System and the Edmonton Catholic School System. Thus, 120 and 280 teachers were selected from the Edmonton Catholic School System and the Edmonton Public School System, respectively. The sample of teachers from the Catholic School System was selected randomly by the System's computer from its list of teachers on staff. The sample from the Public School System was selected on the basis of random numbers generated by the computer. Table 1 outlines the numbers and the identity of each group of educators and school trustees who were selected for the survey. According to Table 1, the total number of educators and school trustees selected from both school systems was 811. In terms of total numbers, then, the proportion remained close to a 3:7 ratio, the same

TABLE 1

COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLE FOR STUDY TWO

| Groups | Edmonton Catholic School System | Edmonton Public School System | Total No. In Sample |
|---|---|---|---|
| School Trustees | 7 | 7 | 14 |
| Principals | 75 | 149 | 224 |
| Counsellors | 29 | 94 | 123 |
| Central Office Personnel | 14 | 36 | 50 |
| Teachers | 120 | 280 | 400 |
| TOTAL | 245 | 566 | 811 |

proportional allocation assigned to the two samples of teachers.

## TEST INSTRUMENTS

The Edmonton Poll of Education (EPE) was used to obtain a measure of public opinion on certain educational issues (see Appendix A). The EPE is a modification of the Annual Surveys of the Public's Attitude Towards the Public School Questions reported in Phi Delta Kappan (Gallup 1970, 1971, 1972). According to Gallup, all questions selected for use in these polls were carefully pretested for their appropriateness by Gallup International in a pilot study. Although no further evidence is provided by Gallup to confirm the validity of his instrument, it is probably safe to accept it at face value since

the Gallup Poll has repeatedly demonstrated that it can measure public opinion. Secondly, the Gallup Poll is widely accepted as used by government and industry.

The Annual Surveys of the Public's Attitude Towards the Public School reported in the Phi Delta Kappan provide no composite score for the overall results of the poll. They simply provide a question-by-question response rate in terms of percentages. Questions included in the EPE were those from the most recent Annual Survey available at the time that this research undertaking was being planned. The questions from the 1971 Annual Survey were thus used. The word 'state' was replaced by the word 'province', and the word 'parochial' was replaced by the word 'separate' in the EPE. Secondly, questions which were not applicable to the Edmonton situation--such as questions on race relations, compulsory kindergarterns, and four-year high schools--were deleted. All questions were stated in a forced-choice manner, as recommended by Erdos (1970) and Shapiro (1970). The rationale behind the forced-choice procedure is that it helps to quantify answers, questions receive higher response rates, and answers are more easily coded, facilitating the analysis of the data.

The Life Orientation Scale (LOT) was developed by Fox (1969) in order to obtain a measure of a person's life orientation in line with Fromm's constructs of necrophilia and biophilia (see Appendix B). The LOT scale is composed of forty items measuring either necrophilia or biophilia. Fox found that persons who obtained high LOT scores, that is, high scores on the construct of biophilia, were more

conceptually complex, more open minded, less authoritarian, less socially acquiescent, more critical of social institutions, and had fewer irrational and illogical ideas than persons with low LOT scores.

Extensive work was done by Fox to ascertain both the validity and reliability of the LOT scale. Content validity was established by: 1) adherence to content, as outlined by Fromm (1965); 2) acceptance of only those items which were in accordance with Fromm's life orientation theory, to the degree that all three judges were in agreement on the suitability of each item; 3) obtaining Fromm's endorsement of the suitability of the items; and 4) doing an item-total correlation analysis. Construct validity was discussed at length by Fox (1969). However, it was established mainly by: 1) the use of validated scales measuring psychological constructs such as the Dogmatism Scale and the California F-scale; 2) comparing the scores obtained by criterion groups of nurses and teachers. Reliability was determined by a test-retest procedure which yielded an estimate of reliability of .83. A second estimate of reliability was obtained from odd-even item correlations and applying the Spearman-Brown formula. The reliability estimate obtained using the latter procedure was .71.

## THE PROCEDURE

### Sample One

Sample One was administered the EPE by personal interview. This procedure was followed because previous experience in Edmonton on polls conducted by mail received a response rate of less than 30%.[2] Research findings in other areas have also shown that the percentage return on mail surveys is low, averaging from 20% to 50% (Travers, 1969). Such a response rate would not have been sufficiently high for the purpose of this study. Thus, the personal interview technique was used. In order to keep the interviewing of all groups as consistent as possible, professional educators, school trustees, and the general public were all asked to read and complete the questionnaire by themselves.

In order to conduct the EPE with Sample One, the general public, it was necessary to obtain a number of persons to conduct the interviews. A relatively large number of interviewers was selected. Kish (1965) maintains that as the number of interviewers increased, the effect of interviewer bias decreased. In order to further reduce the bias, the interviewers were selected on the basis of their being highly dependable. Secondly, they were selected from a variety of occupational backgrounds. The 23 interviewers comprised 6 housewives, 5 teachers, 2 counsellors, 3 university graduate students, 5 secretaries, and 2 businessmen. Sixteen of these interviewers were volunteers, and the other seven were hired at a rate of $2.50 per inter-

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[2] Pers. comm. H. W. Zingle, Edmonton.

view. Twenty of the interviewers were assigned to the active pool of interviewers, while three were kept in reserve as possible replacements for those who might have been unable to complete their assigned quota of interviews for some reason or other.

Prior to going out in the field, all interviewers received a training session by the project director (the author). Each interviewer was given a list of twenty addresses from which he was to obtain ten interviews. He was instructed that the first ten interviews could be conducted in any order, but thereafter the interviews were to be carried out in the order that the addresses appeared on his list. If the interviewer went through his list of twenty addresses and failed to obtain his quota of ten interviews, he was instructed to start at the beginning of his list and make return calls. The Interviewer's Manual (Appendix C) was carefully reviewed with all interviewers. In addition, interviewers were required to complete the EPE themselves in order to familiarize themselves with its contents. They were given an opportunity to ask questions with regard to any uncertainties they had. Finally, they were instructed to contact the project director in the event that any unusual situations arose that could not be handled by themselves.

On February 14, 1973 a letter of introduction was mailed to all households in Edmonton. The purpose of this letter was to introduce the householder to the reason for the poll and to alert him to expect the interviewer. The letter was mailed with the intent that it would be received by the householder shortly prior to his being

contacted by the interviewer.

Interviewers commenced the EPE on February 19, 1973. On February 26, the deadline date given to interviewers to complete their assignments, the EPE was 97% completed. The remaining 3% of the interviews were completed by March 2, 1973.

Sample Two

Sample Two was administered the EPE and the LOT. However, the directions for completing the EPE and the method of contacting the subjects varied from the procedure used with Sample One. All professional educators and school trustees were instructed to complete the EPE in the manner which they believed the general public would complete it. They were not to give their own opinions. In this study, the poll completed by Sample Two, the group of school trustees and professional educators, will be referred to as the Poll of Education (POE) (see Appendix B).

Contact was made with professional educators by mail in order to have them complete the POE and the LOT questionnaires. School trustees, on the other hand, were contacted personally and requested to complete the POE and the LOT in the interviewer's presence.

The POE was pretested in a pilot project conducted in the Sherwood Park Separate School System. It was administered to two school trustees, one central office administrator, four principals, and five teachers. Once a person had completed the POE he met with

the project director to discuss the suitability of the POE. Although several persons mentioned that they found it difficult to respond in the way they believed the public would have, there was general agreement that the directions given were clear and that the answers which they gave corresponded to what they believed the public opinion was.

An analysis of the results indicated that opinions varied a great deal. Therefore, it was assumed that many of the questions on the POE would receive a response which would be significantly different from the others. This finding was critical in that unless there were significant differences found between responses it would be impossible to discriminate between good and poor predictors of public opinion. The results of the pilot project had indicated that the POE was a suitable instrument to use for the purpose of this study.

Permission to do the research in the Edmonton Public School System and the Edmonton Catholic School System was obtained through the Division of Field Services of the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta. Following this, personal contact was made by the project director with the research officer in each of the two school systems with a view to planning in detail the best method of gathering the data. Permission was granted by the school systems to use their courier services to distribute and return the questionnaires. The courier service consists of a private delivery system between the central office and the various schools in each system. The use of courier services was of great practical value, since it eliminated the

need to send the questionnaires by regular mail at a cost of over $200.00.

A notice was also placed in the Superintendent's Bulletin of both school systems during the period, February 2 to February 9, thus making all professional educators in the two systems aware that some of them would be contacted and requested to complete the questionnaire, and that the project had been approved by the senior administration. The Superintendent's Bulletin is the official vehicle for informing professional educators in a school system of new developments and directives from the superintendent's office.

On February 14, 1973, the envelopes were left with the courier services for delivery. Each envelope was addressed to a particular professional educator selected to participate in this study. Each envelope contained a letter of introduction, the POE and LOT questionnaires, and a return envelope addressed to the research officer in the central office of the school system. The questionnaires were to be returned to the research officers rather than to the project director in order to fully utilize the courier system. Each envelope and each questionnaire was precoded with a five digit number which served two purposes: 1) to identify those persons who failed to return their questionnaires, so that a reminder could be sent out; and 2) as an identification number for data processing purposes.

Most questionnaires were returned within one week. However, since several were still outstanding, a written reminder had to be

mailed on February 26 to all those who failed to return the questionnaire. The bulk of the questionnaires were returned between February 20 and March 5, and the rest were received on March 9.

School trustees were approached to complete the questionnaire using a different procedure from that used with professional educators. The rationale for varying the procedure is that school trustees are constantly requested to complete various surveys and questionnaires, and the task of doing so consequently becomes rather burdensome. Because of this, their enthusiasm about completing questionnaires leaves much to be desired. Thus, the project director contacted each school trustee by telephone and arranged for an appointment during which time the school trustee completed the questionnaire. In view of the reluctance to complete questionnaires and the rather small number of school trustees in the sample, it was imperative that this approach be used in order to produce a response rate approaching 100%.

All questionnaires for both samples were completed and returned within three weeks. That is, they were completed and returned between February 19 and March 9. The data obtained from them were then keypunched and transformed for handling by a data processing procedure.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

The following definitions have been adopted for use in this study:

1) Central Office Administrator:- A person employed in the central office of the school systems where the research was being conducted, and who held the position of director or higher in the administrative structure. In other words, those persons in the top administrative positions who have line authority over a group of subordinates.

2) Professional Educators:- Persons employed by either school system as a central office administrator, principal, teacher, or counsellor.

3) School Trustees:- The elected representatives who comprise the school board of the school systems where the research was being conducted.

4) Opinion:- "Verbal 'answers' that an individual gives in response to stimulus situations in which some general 'question' is raised." (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, 1953, p. 6).

5) Public:- Persons, age eighteen and over, living in private households within the 1973 corporate limits of the City of Edmonton, Alberta. Excluded are those persons living in hospitals, hotels, and institutions.

6) Public Opinion:- The expressed opinion of the public, as measured by the EPE.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Certain aspects of the procedure followed in this study are open to criticism because of factors which are innate to the type of study conducted. The following are limitations which should be considered when interpreting the results of this study:

1) Public opinion polls give us a measure of what a certain group of people hold as an opinion at a certain time on a certain issue. This measure, by itself, is not public opinion per se (Schettler, 1960).

2) Public opinion on educational issues gathered by way of the EPE is restricted to those persons with whom contact was made and who chose to cooperate by filling out the EPE questionnaire.

3) The sampling procedure was restricted to residences listed in the City of Edmonton Telephone Directory.

## HYPOTHESES

Two studies were actually undertaken in this research. The first study consisted of a public opinion poll which measured public opinion on certain educational issues. No hypotheses were made with regard to this first study since all that was sought was a measure of public opinion. The second study, on the other hand, was concerned with testing the ability of school trustees and professional educators to predict public opinion. Four primary hypotheses and a secondary

hypothesis were made concerning suggested relationships. These hypotheses are:

Primary Hypotheses:

Hypothesis (a): School trustees are better predictors of public opinion than either central office administrators, principals, counsellors, or teachers.

Hypothesis (b): Counsellors are better predictors of public opinion than either central office administrators, principals, or teachers.

Hypothesis (c): Counsellors will score higher on the LOT than either central office administrators, principals, or teachers.

Hypothesis (d): Professional educators with a high score on LOT are better predictors of public opinion than professional educators with low LOT scores.

Secondary Hypothesis:

Data were gathered from each educator on sex, age, education, income, and the number of school age children. It was felt that an initial exploration of possible relations between personal characteristics of professional educators and their ability to predict public opinion on certain issues in education was warranted, even though no specific mention of expected relationships in this area was made in the review of the literature.

# CHAPTER V

## ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF STUDY ONE

The results of the EPE completed by Sample One, the sample of the general public, were tabulated and percentages calculated. The number in this sample was 200.

Information provided in Table 2 was used to determine whether or not the choice selected by the largest percentage of the sample was significant at the .05 level. Since the sample size in this study was 200, the percentages under column headed 200 were used in all cases except for Question 14 which drew responses from only 100 persons. This low rate of response to Question 14 was due to the fact that only those who chose alternative two in Question 13 were required to answer Question 14. Using a sample of 200, then, the largest possible percentage difference due to error at the .05 level of significance was 8 percentage points below or above the percentage obtained. For example, if 70% of the sample chose a given alternative, then 95 times out of 100 the percentage obtained would be between 62 and 78. Consequently, assurance is present of not obtaining findings due to chance. Thus, in deciding whether or not the majority response was significant, a sixteen percentage difference had to be present between the highest choice in percentages and the next highest choice in percentages. In cases where the alternative of no opinion was present, the percentage found in this category was

TABLE 2

RECOMMENDED ALLOWANCE FOR SAMPLING ERROR OF A PERCENTAGE

| Percentage | Sampling Error Allowance In Percentage Points (at 95 in 100 confidence level)* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | SAMPLE SIZE | | | | | | |
| | 1,500 | 1,000 | 750 | 600 | 400 | 200 | 100 |
| Percentages near 10 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 7 |
| Percentages near 20 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 9 |
| Percentages near 30 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 |
| Percentages near 40 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 11 |
| Percentages near 50 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 11 |
| Percentages near 60 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 11 |
| Percentages near 70 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 |
| Percentages near 80 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 9 |
| Percentages near 90 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 7 |

Source: G. Gallup. How the Nation Views Public Schools. Denver, Col.: CFK Ltd., 1969.

added to the percentage of the second highest choice before a comparison for significance was made. Similarly, in cases where subjects chose not to respond to a question, their percentage was calculated and added to the second highest choice before a comparison for significance was made. Thus, for the purpose of determining whether or not the percentage of the highest choice was significant, that is, not due

to chance, an absence of response and responses of no opinion were combined and added to the total percentage of the second most popular choice. These criteria are very stringent. However, the decision was made that, in this instance, if there was an error it would be on the side of caution. Using this criterion, 52 out of the 70 questions asked met the significance criteria at the .05 level.

The results of the EPE, administered to Sample One, are reported in the remainder of this chapter. Percentage responses with an asterisk to their left indicate the percentage of the responses was different from the percentage of the other responses at the .05 level of significance.

Major Problems

The results indicate that, in the public's view, the major problem faced by schools is discipline, with drug abuse being of second greatest concern(see Table 3). On the other hand, problems related to school board policies and school administration are viewed as less pressing.

The public believes that local school facilities are especially good, and so too are the teachers (see Table 4). The latter finding is somewhat surprising in view of the criticisms which are frequently levelled at teachers by various groups. In view of these findings, one must seriously question the extent to which various vocal pressure groups really represent public opinion. It would appear that these groups represent only the opinion of their

TABLE 3

PROBLEMS WHICH SCHOOLS MUST DEAL WITH

| Problems | Opinion | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | No Response |
| a) Finances | *61% | 35% | 4% |
| b) Discipline | *79 | 18 | 2 |
| c) Facilities | *60 | 37 | 2 |
| d) Dope/drugs | *72 | 26 | 2 |
| e) Teachers' lack of ability/interest | *68 | 29 | 3 |
| f) Parents' lack of interest | *67 | 29 | 4 |
| g) School Administration | *60 | 37 | 3 |
| h) Curriculum | *64 | 33 | 3 |
| i) Pupils' lack of interest | *69 | 28 | 3 |
| j) Vandalism | *62 | 32 | 6 |
| k) Disrespect for teachers | *66 | 32 | 6 |
| l) School Board policies | *59 | 35 | 6 |
| m) Using new/up-to-date methods | *66 | 30 | 4 |
| n) We have no problems | 15 | 70 | 15 |

TABLE 4

WAYS IN WHICH THE LOCAL SCHOOLS ARE GOOD

| Ways | Opinion | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | No Response |
| a) Teachers | *71% | 24% | 5% |
| b) Curriculum | *60 | 34 | 6 |
| c) Facilities | *73 | 23 | 4 |
| d) Up-to-date teaching methods | *66 | 30 | 4 |
| e) Extra-curricular activities | *63 | 32 | 5 |
| f) Small school/classes | 36 | *57 | 7 |
| g) Good administration | *58 | 35 | 7 |
| h) Good student/teacher relationships | *59 | 36 | 5 |
| i) Parents are interested/ participate | 38 | *56 | 6 |
| j) Discipline | 50 | 44 | 6 |
| k) Transportation system | *63 | 28 | 9 |
| l) Equal opportunity for all | *64 | 30 | 6 |
| m) Nothing good | 9 | *73 | 18 |

membership which, compared to the total population, is likely to be very small and, as suggested, highly unrepresentative of the general public.

The public was decidedly not impressed with two aspects of

the local schools (Table 4). They believed that the local schools were not particularly good in getting parents interested and participating in school affairs. They also believed that a strength of local schools was not their small classes.

Cutting School Costs

In view of the restrictions being presently placed on school systems in terms of their ability to raise money, many alternatives have been suggested to reduce educational expenses (see Table 5). However, when these alternatives were presented to the public for their views, they were found to be generally not acceptable. The results of the survey showed that the public was particularly unfavourably disposed to reducing the number of teachers and increasing class size--91% opposed the idea. They were also almost equally opposed to the idea of reducing the special services to children in difficulty--86% opposed. The first of these two findings is particularly interesting in view of the fact that increasing class size is one of the most effective ways of making a significant reduction in a school system's expenditures. It would appear that the public realizes that increasing class size would also affect their children most directly and perhaps opposes it for this reason. The same kind of reasoning may also apply to the reluctance on the public's part to reduce services to children with special problems.

On the other hand, a suggested reduction which would not affect their children directly was much more acceptable. They were

TABLE 5

ITEMS WHICH SCHOOL BOARDS SHOULD CUT

IN ORDER TO REDUCE EXPENDITURE

| Item | For | Against | No Opinion |
|---|---|---|---|
| a) Reduce the number of teachers by increasing class size | 5% | *91% | 4% |
| b) Cut all teachers' salaries by a set percentage | 9 | *77 | 14 |
| c) Cut out after-school activities like bands, clubs, athletics, etc. | 13 | *85 | 2 |
| d) Have the schools run on a 12 month basis with 3-month vacations for students, 1-month for teachers | 34 | 51 | 15 |
| e) Make parents responsible for getting children to and from school | 41 | 51 | 8 |
| f) Cancel any subjects that do not have the minimum number of students registered | 47 | 46 | 7 |
| g) Reduce the number of subjects offered | 24 | *68 | 8 |
| h) Reduce janitorial and maintenance services | 7 | *84 | 9 |
| i) Keep present textbooks and library books although it may mean using outdated materials | 19 | *76 | 5 |
| j) Reduce the amount of supplies and materials teachers use in the classrooms | 20 | *71 | 9 |
| k) Reduce the number of counsellors on the staff | 34 | 55 | 11 |

TABLE 5 (Continued)

| Item | For | Against | No Opinion |
|---|---|---|---|
| l) Reduce special services such as speech, reading, and hearing therapy | 9% | *86% | 9% |
| m) Reduce the number of administrative personnel | *60 | 28 | 12 |

definitely in favour of reducing the number of school administrators--60% were in favour.

Educational Accountability

There was a fair degree of uncertainty in the responses to questions dealing with educational accountability. No clear trend was present which favoured either more accountability or less accountability. For example, Table 6 shows the response to the following statement and question: "In some schools, educational companies are given contracts to put in new methods to teach children in elementary schools certain basic skills such as how to read. These are called 'performance contracts'. If the children do not reach a certain level of achievement, the company does not get paid for those children who fail to reach the standard. Would you like to have such contracts made here in this community, if the overall costs remain the same?"

TABLE 6

PERFORMANCE CONTRACTS

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| Yes | 33 |
| No | 49 |
| No opinion | 18 |

Table 7 shows the response to the question: "Would you favour or oppose the idea of having your local school board hire management experts to look into the costs of local schools to see if the educational goals could be achieved at less cost?" Table 8 gives the response to the question: "Would you like to see the students in the local schools given national tests so that their educational achievement could be compared with students in other communities?"

TABLE 7

SCHOOL BOARDS SHOULD HIRE MANAGEMENT EXPERTS

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| In favour | 53 |
| Oppose | 34 |
| Don't know | 13 |

TABLE 8

NATIONAL TESTS

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| Yes | 48 |
| No | 40 |
| No opinion | 12 |

School Funding

Tables 9, 10, 11, and 12 show the responses to the following questions: 1) "In some nations, the government allots a certain amount of money for each child for his education. The parents can then send the child to any public, separate, or private school they choose. This is called the 'voucher system'. Would you like to see such an idea adopted in this country?" 2) "Suppose the local public (separate) schools said they needed much more money. As you feel at this time, would you vote to raise taxes for this purpose, or would you vote against the raising of taxes for this programme?" 3) "It has been suggested that provincial taxes be increased for everyone in order to let the provincial government pay a greater share of school expenses and to reduce local property taxes. Would you favour an increase in provincial taxes so that real estate taxes could be lowered on local property?" 4) "In some schools, teachers and

students have fund raising events to finance special projects for school equipment, after-school activities, and the like. Do you think it is a good idea or a poor idea for the schools to permit these events?"

TABLE 9

VOUCHER SYSTEM

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| In favour | 50 |
| Oppose | 32 |
| No opinion | 18 |

TABLE 10

INCREASE IN TAXES

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| For | 28 |
| Against | *63 |
| No opinion | 9 |

TABLE 11

INCREASE IN PROVINCIAL TAX

DECREASE IN PROPERTY TAXES

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| For | 53 |
| Against | 28 |
| No opinion | 19 |

Table 12

FUND RAISING EVENTS

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| Good Idea | *83 |
| Poor idea | 15 |
| No opinion | 2 |

The respondents were most clear on two issues regarding the issue of school funding. Using increased taxation in order to raise funds was opposed by 63% of the respondents (see Table 10). Conversely, 83% of the respondents were in favour of fund raising for an educational project by teachers and students in specific schools (see

Table 12). This view suggests that schools wishing to embark on new programmes or new educational ventures may rely on private funding in their community without alienating it. It appears that the public is far more willing to contribute money to a project in their local school than to vote more tax money to a school system as a corporate entity. Thus, it is also evident that the public is not reluctant to make educational expenditures if they see a direct benefit accruing to their children.

Parent Accountability

A clear trend appeared in this area, in that respondents wanted parents to have a greater involvement with their children's schools. This was most evident in their overwhelming endorsement of a monthly school meeting for parents--82% were in favour. This information would appear to lend support to those professional educators who advocate a community school concept, that is, a school which is far more involved with the local community in which it is located. Such a school would have elected parents directly involved in setting school policy in that community, much like a miniature school board. This approach may well make the parent-school relationship more meaningful and relevant. In turn, there could be greater and more meaningful participation by parents in school affairs.

Although the results were not found to be significant following the scoring procedure and statistical analysis used in this study, the results reported in Table 13 are most interesting. In

response to the question: "When some children do poorly in school, some people place the blame on the children, some on the children's home life, some on the school, and some on the teachers. Of course, all of these things share the blame, but where would you place the chief blame?" 48% of the public placed the blame on the home life of a child. It would appear that the public places the responsibility for poor school work on the shoulders of the child's parents rather than on the school. This finding is particularly interesting if it is considered in the light of the blame so frequently placed on schools for failing to meet student needs.

TABLE 13

WHO IS TO BLAME FOR POOR SCHOOL WORK

| Causes | Percent |
|---|---|
| Children | 9 |
| Home Life | 48 |
| School | 6 |
| Teachers | 9 |
| No opinion | 28 |

Table 14 shows the response to the question: "A suggestion has been made that parents of school children attend one evening class

TABLE 14

MONTHLY PARENTS' MEETING

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| Good idea | *82 |
| Poor idea | 9 |
| No opinion | 9 |

a month to find out what they can do to improve their children's behaviour and increase their interest in school work. Is it a good idea or a poor idea?"

Discipline

Tables 15, 16, 17, and 18 give the results for responses to the following four questions: 1) "How do you feel about the discipline in the public/separate schools--is it too strict, not strict enough, or just about right?" 2) "If 'not strict enough', can you tell me what you mean? In what way is discipline not strict enough? Mark your choice with an X." 3) "Some students are not interested in school. Often they keep other students from working in school. What should be done in these cases? Mark your choice with an X."
4) "Some people say that if the schools and the teachers interest the children in learning, most disciplinary problems disappear. Do you agree?"

TABLE 15

DISCIPLINE

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| Too strict | 2 |
| Not strict enough | 44 |
| Just about right | 35 |
| Kon't know | 19 |

TABLE 16

WAYS IN WHICH DISCIPLINE NOT STRICT ENOUGH

| | Ways | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| a) | Teachers lack authority | *67% | 33% |
| b) | Students have too much freedom | *80 | 20 |
| c) | Disrespect for teachers | *77 | 23 |
| d) | Rules are not enforced | *70 | 30 |
| e) | Dress code is too liberal | 41 | 59 |
| f) | Vandalism | *67 | 33 |
| g) | Parents not interested in school affairs | *75 | 25 |

TABLE 17

METHODS OF HANDLING PROBLEM CHILDREN

| | Methods | Yes | No | No Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) | Special classes for all who are not interested | 46% | 40% | 14% |
| b) | Expell them | 10 | *75 | 15 |
| c) | Offer better/more interesting curriculum/ teaching methods | *73 | 16 | 11 |
| d) | Special counselling | *79 | 10 | 11 |
| e) | Harsher discipline | 31 | 53 | 16 |
| f) | Vocational training | *68 | 17 | 15 |
| g) | Make their parents responsible | 41 | 45 | 14 |
| h) | Put in school for problem students | 26 | *59 | 15 |
| i) | Teacher should take more interest in such students | 59 | 27 | 14 |

TABLE 18

PROBLEMS DISAPPEAR WHEN TEACHERS

INTEREST CHILDREN IN LEARNING

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| Agree | *80 |
| Disagree | 15 |
| No opinion | 5 |

A study of the preceding tables reveals no clear agreement on whether or not discipline was too strict or too lax. There was a trend which indicated that most respondents felt that discipline was not strict enough. Within this group of respondents, there was general acceptance of all suggested areas where discipline might not be strict enough, except for the dress code--59% stated that the dress code was not too liberal. In terms of how students who are not interested in school should be handled, there was a clear rejection of the alternatives of expelling them--75% opposed the idea--or putting them in a school for problem students--59% opposed. There was also strong support for the view that most discipline problems would disappear if schools and teachers were more interested in children and learning--80% were in agreement.

Educational Innovation

The following questions dealt with the topic of educational innovation, and the results are tabulated in Tables 19, 20, and 21: 1) "In the schools in your community, do you think too many educational changes are being tried, or not enough?" 2) "In some schools, time spent by students in classrooms is being reduced to give more time for independent study, that is, carrying out learning projects on their own. Should the local schools give more time to independent study than they presently do, or should they give less time?" 3) "Some people feel that too much emphasis is placed in high schools on preparing students for college and not enough emphasis on preparing

students for occupations that do not require a college degree. Do you agree or disagree?"

TABLE 19

EDUCATIONAL CHANGES

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| Too many being tried | 17 |
| Not enough | 21 |
| About right | 36 |
| Don't know | 26 |

TABLE 20

TIME NEEDED FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| More time needed | 25 |
| Less time needed | 23 |
| About right now | 31 |
| No opinion | 21 |

TABLE 21

TOO MUCH EMPHASIS PLACED ON

PREPARATION FOR COLLEGE

| Opinion | Percent |
|---|---|
| Agree | *69 |
| Disagree | 20 |
| No opinion | 11 |

Respondents were divided on whether or not there were too many educational changes and whether or not there was too much time spent on independent study. However, there was clear agreement that high schools spent too much time preparing students for college and not enough time in preparing them for the work world--69% agreed.

## CHAPTER VI

## ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF STUDY TWO

### Rate of Return of Questionnaires

A total of 568 questionnaires were returned of the 797 that were sent out to professional educators for a rate of return of 71%. On the other hand, 12 of the 14 school trustees in Edmonton completed the questionnaires for a return rate of 86%. Table 22 outlines the percentage of questionnaires returned by the five groups under study.

TABLE 22

RATE OF RETURN OF QUESTIONNAIRES

| | Group | Number Sent | Number Returned | Rate of Return |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) | Teachers | 400 | 252 | 63% |
| 2) | Principals | 224 | 185 | 82% |
| 3) | Central Office Administrators | 50 | 36 | 72% |
| 4) | Counsellors | 123 | 95 | 77% |
| 5) | School Trustees | 14 | 12 | 86% |

The responses that school trustees and professional educators made on the POE were scored as follows. First of all, the responses made by the general public to each question on the EPE were analysed

and those questions on the EPE that had one alternative selected by a significant majority of the general public were identified. The alternative in each question of the EPE that was selected by a significant majority of the general public was keyed as representing the wishes of the public. Persons completing the POE who chose the same alternative were given a score of one, any other response being given a score of zero. These scores obtained by school trustees and professional educators on the POE were then totalled. High scores indicated a good predictor of public opinion, while a low score indicated a poor predictor of public opinion.

Testing the Hypotheses

Each hypothesis will be restated and followed by an analysis of the results of the tests performed. A .10 significance level will be used.

Hypothesis (a): School trustees are better predictors of public opinion than either central office administrators, principals, counsellors, or teachers.

A one way analysis of variance was conducted to determine if a significant difference existed between the means of groups on the variable 'public opinion'. Also, a test for homogeneity of variance was conducted to determine if a significant statistical difference existed between the variances of the groups on the variable 'public opinion' (see Table 23 for means and standard deviations). The test for homogeneity of variance found no statistically significant

TABLE 23

MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF EACH GROUP ON THE VARIABLE PUBLIC OPINION

| Group | Number | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1) Teachers | 252 | 30.94 | 7.39 |
| 2) Principals | 185 | 30.82 | 6.49 |
| 3) Central Office Administrators | 36 | 33.75 | 5.63 |
| 4) Counsellors | 95 | 33.37 | 6.74 |
| 5) School Trustees | 12 | 33.41 | 6.95 |
| MEANS | | 31.52 | 6.95 |

difference between groups.

The analysis of variance between groups on the variable 'public opinion' yielded an F statistic of 3.81 which was significant at the .10 level. In view of these significant results, a Scheffé simple pair-wise mean comparison was done. The results of the Scheffé yielded significant differences in the comparison between variable 1 (teachers) and variable 4 (counsellors), as well as between variable 2 (principals) and variable 4 (counsellors) at the .10 level of significance (see Table 24).

Thus, hypothesis (a) is rejected. School trustees are not

TABLE 24

PROBABILITY MATRIX FOR SCHEFFÉ-MULTIPLE COMPARISON OF MEANS

| Group | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) Teachers | 1.000 | 0.999 | 0.266 | 0.073 | 0.831 |
| 2) Principals | | 1.000 | 0.246 | 0.072 | 0.809 |
| 3) Central Office Administrators | | | 1.000 | 0.999 | 0.999 |
| 4) Counsellors | | | | 1.000 | 1.000 |
| 5) School Trustees | | | | | 1.000 |

better predictors of public opinion than either central office administrators, principals, counsellors, or teachers.

Hypothesis (b): Counsellors are better predictors of public opinion than either central office administrators, principals, or teachers.

Hypothesis (b) was examined at the same time as hypothesis (a) and the same procedures were used. The results indicated that counsellors were significantly better predictors than either teachers or principals at the .10 level of significance. Thus, although hypothesis (b) was not completely supported, there was support for a part of it. That is, counsellors proved to be better predictors of public opinion than either teachers or principals, but not signi-

ficantly better than central office administrators.

Hypothesis (c): Counsellors will score higher on the LOT than either central office administrators, principals, or teachers.

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to determine if a significant statistical difference existed between the means of groups on the life orientation variable. Also, a test for homogeneity of variance was conducted to determine if a significant difference existed between the variances of the groups on the LOT variable (see Table 25 for means and standard deviations).

TABLE 25

MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF EACH GROUP ON THE LIFE ORIENTATION VARIABLE

| Group | Number | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1) Teachers | 252 | 131.82 | 15.38 |
| 2) Principals | 185 | 132.54 | 14.84 |
| 3) Central Office Administrators | 36 | 134.22 | 15.34 |
| 4) Counsellors | 95 | 137.65 | 15.75 |
| 5) School Trustees | 12 | 128.25 | 21.03 |
| MEANS | | 133.08 | 15.48 |

The test for homogeneity of variance found no statistically significant difference between groups.

The analysis of variance between groups on the LOT variable yielded an F statistic of 2.91 which was significant at the .10 level.

In view of the significant results discovered by doing an analysis of variance, a Scheffé simple pair-wise mean comparison was done. The results yielded one significant comparison at the .10 level between variable 1 and variable 4. This means that counsellors scored significantly higher on the LOT than teachers (see Table 26).

TABLE 26

PROBABILITY MATRIX FOR SCHEFFÉ-MULTIPLE COMPARISON OF MEANS

| Group | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) Teachers | 1.000 | 0.993 | 0.943 | 0.044 | 0.960 |
| 2) Principals | | 1.000 | 0.985 | 0.142 | 0.927 |
| 3) Central Office Administrators | | | 1.000 | 0.862 | 0.852 |
| 4) Counsellors | | | | 1.000 | 0.410 |
| 5) School Trustees | | | | | 1.000 |

Consequently, hypothesis (c) was rejected. However, support

was found for one portion of the hypothesis in as much as counsellors scored higher than teachers on the LOT at the .10 level of significance. No evidence was found to support the other part of the hypothesis which suggested that counsellors would have higher LOT scores than either school trustees, central office administrators, or principals.

Hypothesis (d): Professional educators with a high score on LOT are better predictors of public opinion than professional educators with low LOT scores.

Pearson-product moment correlations were calculated for LOT score and public opinion score (see Appendix E). On the basis of the Pearson-product moment correlations, there appears to be no significant relationship between LOT score and ability to predict public opinion. Thus, hypothesis (d) was rejected.

Secondary Hypothesis: Biographical data were gathered on professional educators and school trustees. An initial exploration of possible relations between biographical characteristics of professional educators and their ability to predict public opinion was warranted even though no specific mention of expected relationships in this area was mentioned in the review of the literature.

Biographical data were dichotomized, that is, given a score of 1 or 0. Pearson-product moment correlations were then calculated

for biographical data and prediction of public opinion score (see Appendix E).

No relationship was found between biographical data and prediction of public opinion score. Consequently, the secondary hypothesis was rejected. If a statistically significant relationship had been found, a multiple regression analysis would have been performed to discover which combinations of LOT scores and biographical data were associated with those persons who best predicted public opinion.

In view of the fact that the analysis of variance found counsellors to be better predictors of public opinion than either teachers or principals, and that counsellors obtained a significantly higher LOT score than did teachers, an analysis of covariance was undertaken in order to determine if there was any interaction between the variable 'job affiliation' and the life orientation that affected ability to predict public opinion.

An analysis of covariance, using LOT scores as the covariate, was performed on the data to discover if there was a relationship between job affiliation and ability to predict public opinion when LOT scores for the five groups were adjusted. The results indicate that there was an overall difference between the groups on the basis of job affiliation. An F statistic of 4.21 was obtained, which was significant at the .10 level. The test for multiple comparisons indicated differences between variable 1 (teachers) and variable 4 (counsellors), as well as between variable 2 (principals) and variable

4 (counsellors) at the .10 level of significance. These findings are consistent with those reported in Table 24. Thus, one can conclude that LOT score does not significantly affect ability to predict public opinion.

# CHAPTER VII

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The research reported here dealt with two studies. Study one surveyed public opinion of residents of Edmonton on certain educational issues. Study two dealt with school trustees and professional educators, and focused on their ability to predict public opinion on the same educational issues.

### Study One

Several interesting findings resulted from the first study. Not only were these findings intrinsically interesting, but they also provided valuable insight, for decision makers, on public opinion on educational issues. This information can permit decision makers to adequately undertake the task of making decisions on the basis of what the public opinion is precisely, rather than on the basis of hearsay comments. Another valuable result is the fact that this study outlines a methodology for use by school systems interested in conducting their own public opinion polls.

The procedure which was used in conducting the EPE has several features which may be of value to school systems planning to do a public opinion poll. Perhaps of greatest value is the fact that the EPE demonstrated that a public opinion poll can be administered within a two-week period. Consequently, information derived from it

is readily available for those who may wish to use it. Another major value of the EPE is the manual which accompanies it. This manual provides a brief, but comprehensive, guide which enables interviewers to conduct a poll with the minimum amount of difficulty. Despite the fact that much is written about how interviewers should conduct a poll, few manuals are readily available for use in the actual conducting of a poll. Finally, the EPE provides information on sampling techniques and the selection of interviewers, which is probably of value to those who wish to conduct a public opinion poll of education.

Some of the results of the EPE are most interesting because of the light which they shed on educational implications which go far beyond the actual response to the question. The EPE discovered that the public believes that one of the ways in which local schools are particularly good is that the schools have good teachers. This view is in direct contrast to that which is frequently reported by the news media or expounded by one organization or another. This finding suggests that both the media and the organizations who purport to speak for the public may very well not be doing so. Decision makers should, therefore, be careful in interpreting what these groups say about the wishes of the public, for they may be in error.

The EPE found, as the media frequently suggest, that the public is opposed to increasing taxation for educational purposes. However, the reluctance to increase funds should not be interpreted as meaning that the public favours educational cutbacks. Specifically, the public appeared opposed to educational cuts which would

directly affect the instruction that students receive, such as increased class size or reduction in special services, after-school activities, and janitorial services. Similarly, the public was in favour of fund raising by local schools for educational programmes. Therefore, it appears that the public is not opposed to increased educational taxation if the funds so raised go to the projects directly affecting the educational programme which students receive. Support for the suggestion that the number of administrators be reduced also corroborates the view that the public is only opposed to those expenditures which do not result in direct benefits to students. On the other hand, however, since the reduction of administrators was the only cut which the public was clearly in favour of, perhaps an alternate interpretation is possible. The endorsement of a proposed cutback in administration may well be a reflection of the image which administrators have been presenting to the public. Consequently, it might be imperative that those responsible for education, particularly those in administrative positions, reexamine the image which they have been projecting to the public.

In terms of issues which the schools must deal with, the majority of the public chose discipline above any other issue. However, there was no clear public opinion as to whether or not discipline was too strict. One point was clear, nevertheless, and this was that the public is opposed to using punitive approaches to handling problem children and preferred approaches which emphasize a positive, remedial treatment.

Finally, the EPE found that the public believes that a greater involvement by parents in their children's education was a good idea. Furthermore, respondents to the EPE placed the prime responsibility for a child's failure in school on his home life. It seems that the public believes that parents have an important role to play in the education of their children. Consequently, if parents are to be able to fulfil this role, methods must be developed which will permit them to become more directly involved in the formal education of their children.

The EPE also proved to be a valuable tool to obtain a measure of public opinion. Use of the EPE enabled the identification of general themes in public opinion such as the public's general reaction towards teachers, school finances, discipline, and parental involvement with schools. Thus, school systems appear to be able to gain valuable information about the wishes of the public by conducting a public opinion poll on education.

Study Two

The second study, which dealt with school trustees and professional educators, rejected hypothesis (a) by demonstrating that school trustees were not better predictors of public opinion than either central office administrators, principals, counsellors, or teachers. Evidence was found to support part of hypothesis (b), for counsellors were found to be better predictors of public opinion than either teachers or principals. Similarly, support was found for part

of hypothesis (c) because counsellors scored significantly higher than teachers on the LOT. No evidence was found to support hypothesis (d) which suggested that persons who scored high on the LOT would be better predictors of public opinion than those who obtained low LOT scores. Likewise, no support was found for the secondary hypothesis. In other words, biographical factors were not found to be correlated with accuracy of prediction of public opinion.

Although the research finding rejected hypothesis (a), this should not be interpreted as meaning that the results are unimportant. On the contrary, much valuable information has been provided by the rejection of the hypothesis. First of all, it provides support for the view that school trustees are no more aware of public opinion on educational issues than any group of professional educators. These findings have possible far reaching implications for the decision making process of school boards. School trustees should seriously question their ability to judge public opinion on educational issues. The fact that they are elected by the public does not mean that they are in tune with the wishes of the public on educational issues. Therefore, in making decisions which need to reflect the wishes of the public, school trustees should not regard themselves as the source of all such knowledge.

Professional educators were found to be just as capable as school trustees in predicting public opinion. The implication for educational practice is that since school trustees do not have a more accurate perception of the public's wishes on educational issues, they

cannot dismiss the advice of professional educators on public opinion in an offhand manner. Furthermore, they should be more cautious in presenting the view of the public to professional educators who are able to perceive public opinion as accurately as themselves.

Since no evidence was found to suggest that school trustees are better predictors of public opinion than any of the four groups of professional educators, school boards wishing to obtain an accurate estimate of public opinion should not rely solely on the ability of school trustees to accurately perceive public opinion, while at the same time rejecting the perceptions of professional educators. It appears that school boards wishing to have an accurate gauge of public opinion should use methods like the public opinion poll rather than rely on the perceptions of their trustees and professional educators.

Limitations of time and money do not always make it feasible to conduct accurate readings on public opinion such as can be obtained with a public opinion poll. In such situations, it is usual for decision makers who wish to reflect the wishes of the public to contact a few persons to obtain a sample of opinions. This study has found that counsellors are significantly better predictors of public opinion on educational issues than either teachers or principals. In view of this finding, therefore, decision makers are well advised to solicit the counsellors' views of public opinion rather than the views of principals or teachers.

There was no significant correlation found between ability

to predict public opinion and life orientation. In addition, no significant correlations were found between either life orientation or biographical factors and ability to predict public opinion. Therefore, one should not look to either life orientation or items of biographical data as used in this study in order to identify good predictors of public opinion. Although neither life orientation nor biographical factors assisted in the identification of accurate predictors of public opinion, this study found that counsellors were better predictors of public opinion than either principals or teachers. Therefore, occupational group affiliation appears to have merit as a method of discriminating between accurate and inaccurate predictors of public opinion.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Currently, the Alberta Department of Education possesses extensive data on the state of education in the province. The department gathers information systematically on school building costs, teacher salaries, transportation, and a host of other topics. However, information on public opinion is not systematically gathered. It would seem logical to assume that those persons responsible for education at the provincial level would want to be aware of public opinion towards education. A research project could easily be set up to test the feasibility of a public opinion poll on a provincial scale on certain key educational issues. If it is found feasible,

several benefits would accrue from a provincial public opinion poll on education, since provincial officials would become informed of the wishes of the public. Moreover, the questions which are developed for provincial use could be used by school systems wishing to measure local public opinion. The results of the provincial poll could then act as the criteria against which the individual school systems could compare their own local results. Thus, school systems will be able to identify problem areas and take remedial action.

Study Two should be repeated making two alterations in the sample. The numbers in the groups of school trustees and central office administrators should be increased to the point where each group would have approximately 100 subjects. This suggestion is made because, in this study, the mean score on predicting public opinion was almost identical for school trustees, central office administrators, and counsellors, but only the group of counsellors turned out to be statistically significantly better predictors of public opinion than teachers or principals. Further research may reveal that, by increasing sample size of the groups of school trustees and central office administrators, these two groups are also significantly better predictors of public opinion than either teachers or principals.

Another interesting variation which could be made to the model used for Study Two, would be to compare school trustees with other groups in the community, rather than with professional educators. It would be most interesting to discover if school trustees

are better predictors of public opinion than, say, the local Chamber of Commerce, the Press Club, the local PTA, or parent councils that are elected by the parents of children attending certain schools. Since these groups all claim to be spokesmen for the public, it would be interesting to discover how well they know public opinion.

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A

## DIRECTIONS

1. Attached you will find a copy of the Edmonton Poll of Education.

2. You are requested to complete this poll by selecting the answer which best expresses your opinion on the subject.

3. Beside each question you will find an appropriate space for your answer. Place an X in the space by the answer that best expresses your opinion.

4. It is important that you answer all questions in order for the results of this study to be valid.

5. The purpose of this poll is to determine public opinion on certain issues in education. Once this is done the information will be tabulated, analysed, and forwarded to the Edmonton School Boards. Hopefully, this will provide them with information which will assist them to make decisions which are in line with the wishes of the public.

6. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. If you have any concerns about this project, call me at 434 9325.

John Brosseau
Project Director

# THE EDMONTON POLL OF EDUCATION, 1973

1. Do you think that the following issues are problems with which the public (separate) schools in this community must deal, Mark your choice with an X.

| | | YES | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) | Finances | ___ | ___ | (1) |
| b) | Discipline | ___ | ___ | (2) |
| c) | Facilities | ___ | ___ | (3) |
| d) | Dope--drugs | ___ | ___ | (4) |
| e) | Teachers' lack of interest/ ability | ___ | ___ | (5) |
| f) | Parents' lack of interest | ___ | ___ | (6) |
| g) | School administration | ___ | ___ | (7) |
| h) | Curriculum | ___ | ___ | (8) |
| i) | Pupil's lack of interest | ___ | ___ | (9) |
| j) | Vandalism | ___ | ___ | (10) |
| k) | Disrespect for teachers | ___ | ___ | (11) |
| l) | School Board policies | ___ | ___ | (12) |
| m) | Using new/up-to-date methods | ___ | ___ | (13) |
| n) | We have no problems | ___ | ___ | (14) |

2. In your opinion, in what ways are your local public (separate) schools particularly good? Mark your choice with an X.

| | | YES | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) | Teachers | ___ | ___ | (15) |
| b) | Curriculum | ___ | ___ | (16) |
| c) | Facilities | ___ | ___ | (17) |
| d) | Up-to-date teaching methods | ___ | ___ | (18) |
| e) | Extra-curricular activities | ___ | ___ | (19) |
| f) | Small school/classes | ___ | ___ | (20) |
| g) | Good administration | ___ | ___ | (21) |
| h) | Good student-teacher relationships | ___ | ___ | (22) |
| i) | Parents are interested/participate | ___ | ___ | (23) |
| j) | Discipline | ___ | ___ | (24) |
| k) | Transportation System | ___ | ___ | (25) |
| l) | Equal opportunity for all | ___ | ___ | (26) |
| m) | Nothing good | ___ | ___ | (27) |

3. Suppose your public (separate) school board were "forced" to cut some things from school costs because there is not enough money. I am going to give you a list of many ways that have been suggested for reducing school costs. Will you tell me, in the case of each one, whether your opinion is favourable or unfavourable?

a) Reduce the number of teachers by increasing class sizes.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (28) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

b) Cut all teachers' salaries by a set percentage

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (29) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

c) Cut out after-school activities like bands, clubs, athletics, etc.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (30) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

d) Have the schools run on a 12 month basis with three month vacations for students, one month for teachers.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (31) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

e) Make parents responsible for getting children to and from school.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (32) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

f) Cancel any subjects that do not have the minimum number of students registered.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (33) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

g) Reduce the number of subjects offered

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (34) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

h) Reduce janitorial and maintenance services

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (35) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

i) Keep present textbooks and library books although it may mean using outdated materials.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (36) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

j) Reduce the amount of supplies and materials teachers use in classrooms.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (37) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

k) Reduce the number of counsellors on the staff.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (38) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

l) Reduce special services, such as speech, reading, and hearing therapy.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (39) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

m) Reduce the number of administrative personnel.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favourable | ___ | (40) |
| Unfavourable | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

4. In some schools, educational companies are given contracts to put in new methods to teach the children in elementary schools certain basic skills, such as how to read. These are called "performance contracts". If the children don't reach a certain

level of achievement, the company doesn't get paid for those children who fail to reach the standard. Would you like to have such contracts made here, in this community, if the overall costs remain the same?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | ___ | (41) |
| No | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

5. Would you favour or oppose the idea of having your school board hire management experts to look into the costs of local schools to see if the educational goals could be achieved at less cost?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favour | ___ | (42) |
| Oppose | ___ | |
| Don't know | ___ | |

6. Would you like to see the students in the local schools be given national tests so that their educational achievement could be compared with students in other communities?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | ___ | (43) |
| No | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

7. In some nations, the government allots a certain amount of money for each child for his education. The parents can then send the child to any public, separate, or private school they choose. This is called the "voucher system". Would you like to see such an idea adopted in this country?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favour | ___ | (44) |
| Oppose | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

8. Suppose the local public (separate) schools said they need much more money. As you feel at this time, would you vote to raise taxes for this purpose, or would you vote against raising taxes for this programme?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| For | ___ | (45) |
| Against | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

9. It has been suggested that provincial taxes be increased for everyone in order to let the provincial government pay a greater share of school expenses and to reduce local property taxes. Would you favour an increase in provincial taxes so that real estate taxes could be lowered on local property?

(46)

For ___
Against ___
No opinion ___

10. In some schools, teachers and students have fund-raising events to finance special projects for school equipment, after-school activities and the like. Do you think it is a good idea or a poor idea for the schools to permit these events?

(47)

Good idea ___
Poor idea ___
No opinion ___

11. When some children do poorly in school, some people place the blame on the children, some on the children's home life, some on the school, and some on the teachers. Of course, all of these things share the blame, but where would you place the chief blame?

(48)

Children ___
Home Life ___
School ___
Teachers ___
No opinion ___

12. A suggestion has been made that parents of school children attend one evening class a month to find out what they can do to improve their children's behaviour and increase their interest in school work. Is it a good idea or a poor idea?

(49)

Good idea ___
Poor idea ___
No opinion ___

13. How do you feel about the discipline in the public (separate) schools? Is it too strict, not strict enough, or just about right?

(50)

Too strict ___
Not strict enough ___
Just about right ___
Don't know ___

14. If "not strict enough": Can you tell me what you mean? In what way is discipline not strict enough? Mark your choice with an X.

(51)

| | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| a) Teachers lack authority | ___ | ___ |
| b) Students have too much freedom | ___ | ___ |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| c) | Disrespect for teachers | ___ ___ | (53) |
| d) | Rules are not enforced | ___ ___ | (54) |
| e) | Dress code is too liberal | ___ ___ | (55) |
| f) | Vandalism | ___ ___ | (56) |
| g) | Parents are not interested in school affairs | ___ ___ | (57) |

15. Some students are not interested in school. Often they keep other students from working in school. What should be done in these cases? Mark your choice with an X.

| | | YES | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) | Special classes for all who are not interested | ___ | ___ | (58) |
| b) | Expell them | ___ | ___ | (59) |
| c) | Offer better/more interesting curriculum/teaching methods | ___ | ___ | (60) |
| d) | Special counselling | ___ | ___ | (61) |
| e) | Harsher discipline | ___ | ___ | (62) |
| f) | Vocational training | ___ | ___ | (63) |
| g) | Make their parents responsible | ___ | ___ | (64) |
| h) | Put in school for problem students | ___ | ___ | (65) |
| i) | Teacher should take more interest in such students | ___ | ___ | (66) |

16. Some people say that if the schools and the teachers interest the children in learning, most disciplinary problems disappear. Do you agree?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Agree | ___ | (67) |
| Disagree | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

17. In the schools in your community, do you think too many educational changes are being tried, or not enough?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Too many | ___ | (68) |
| Not enough | ___ | |
| About right | ___ | |
| Don't know | ___ | |

18. In some schools, time spent by student in classroom is being reduced to give more time for independent study, that is, carrying out learning projects on their own. Should the local schools give more time to independent study than they presently do, or should they give less time?

More ___ (69)
Less ___
About right now ___
No opinion ___

19. Some people feel that too much emphasis is placed in the high schools on preparing students for college and not enough emphasis on preparing students for occupations that do not require a college degree. Do you agree or disagree?

Agree ___ (70)
Disagree ___
No opinion ___

Please place an X beside the appropriate statement which applies to you.

Where do your children go to school:

a) No children in school ___ (71)
b) Public school ___
c) Separate school ___

Sex

a) Man ___ (72)
b) Woman ___

Religion

a) Catholic ___ (73)
b) Other ___

Age

a) 18 to 29 ___ (74)
b) 30 to 49 ___
c) 50 years and over ___

Education (last grade completed)

a) Elementary grades ___ (75)
b) High School incomplete ___
c) High School complete ___
d) Technical, Trade, or Business School ___
e) University incomplete ___
f) University graduate ___

Occupation of Chief Wage Earner (76)

a) Business and Professional ___
b) Clerical and Sales ___
c) Farm ___
d) Skilled labour ___
e) Unskilled labour ___
f) Nonlabour force ___
g) Undesignated ___

# APPENDIX B

# OPINIONNAIRE BOOKLET

## DIRECTIONS

1. Attached you will find a copy of the Edmonton Poll of Education.

2. You are requested to complete this poll by selecting the answer which is most frequently selected by the general public in this community. DO NOT answer these questions with your own opinions. But rather answer them as you believe the general public would.

3. Beside each question you will find an appropriate space for your answer. Place an X in the space by the answer that outlines what you believe is the public's response.

4. The purpose of this study is to obtain estimates by educators on public opinion. These data will enable us to identify educators who are the best estimators of public opinion.

5. Please return the completed questionnaire in the self-addressed envelope by February 21, 1973.

6. If you have any concerns please contact the project director at 434 9325.

7. It is important to answer each question as failure to answer any one item impairs the meaningfulness of the survey.

8. Remember - answer these questions as you believe the general public would.

John Brosseau
Project Director

# THE POLL OF EDUCATION, 1973

Please complete each of the following questions. Select the answer which you believe is most frequently selected by the general public in this community.

1. Do you think that the following issues are problems with which the public (separate) schools in this community must deal? Mark your choice with an X.

| | | YES | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) | Finances | ___ | ___ | (1) |
| b) | Discipline | ___ | ___ | (2) |
| c) | Facilities | ___ | ___ | (3) |
| d) | Dope-drugs | ___ | ___ | (4) |
| e) | Teachers' lack of interst/ability | ___ | ___ | (5) |
| f) | Parents' lack of interest | ___ | ___ | (6) |
| g) | School administration | ___ | ___ | (7) |
| h) | Curriculum | ___ | ___ | (8) |
| i) | Pupil's lack of interest | ___ | ___ | (9) |
| j) | Vandalism | ___ | ___ | (10) |
| k) | Disrespect for teachers | ___ | ___ | (11) |
| l) | School Board policies | ___ | ___ | (12) |
| m) | Using new/up-to-date methods | ___ | ___ | (13) |
| n) | We have no problems | ___ | ___ | (14) |

2. In your opinion, in what ways are your local public (separate) schools particularly good? Mark your choice with an X.

| | | YES | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) | Teachers | ___ | ___ | (15) |
| b) | Curriculum | ___ | ___ | (16) |
| c) | Facilities | ___ | ___ | (17) |
| d) | Up-to-date teaching methods | ___ | ___ | (18) |
| e) | Extra-curricular activities | ___ | ___ | (19) |
| f) | Small school/classes | ___ | ___ | (20) |
| g) | Good administration | ___ | ___ | (21) |
| h) | Good student-teacher relationships | ___ | ___ | (22) |
| i) | Parents are interested/ participate | ___ | ___ | (23) |
| j) | Discipline | ___ | ___ | (24) |
| k) | Transportation System | ___ | ___ | (25) |
| l) | Equal opportunity for all | ___ | ___ | (26) |
| m) | Nothing good | ___ | ___ | (27) |

3. Suppose your public (separate) school board were "forced" to cut some things from school costs because there is not enough money. I am going to give you a list of many ways that have been suggested for reducing school costs. Will you tell me, in the case of each one, whether your opinion is favourable or unfavourable?

a) Reduce the number of teachers by increasing class sizes.

Favourable ___ (28)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

b) Cut all teachers' salaries by a set percentage

Favourable ___ (29)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

c) Cut out after-school activities like bands, clubs, athletics, etc.

Favourable ___ (30)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

d) Have the schools run on a 12 month basis with three month vacations for students, one month for teachers.

Favourable ___ (31)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

e) Make parents responsible for getting children to and from school.

Favourable ___ (32)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

f) Cancel any subjects that do not have the minimum number of students registered.

Favourable ___ (33)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

g) Reduce the number of subjects offered

Favourable ___ (34)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

h) Reduce janitorial and maintenance services

Favourable ___ (35)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

i) Keep present textbooks and library books although it may mean using outdated materials.

Favourable ___ (36)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

j) Reduce the amount of supplies and materials teachers use in classrooms.

Favourable ___ (37)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

k) Reduce the number of counsellors on the staff.

Favourable ___ (38)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

l) Reduce special services, such as speech, reading, and hearing therapy.

Favourable ___ (39)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

m) Reduce the number of administrative personnel.

Favourable ___ (40)
Unfavourable ___
No opinion ___

4. In some schools, educational companies are given contracts to put in new methods to teach the children in elementary schools certain basic skills, such as how to read. These are called "performance contracts". If the children don't reach a certain

level of achievement, the company doesn't get paid for those children who fail to reach the standard. Would you like to have such contracts made here, in this community, if the overall costs remain the same?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | ___ | (41) |
| No | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

5. Would you favour or oppose the idea of having your school board hire management experts to look into the costs of local schools to see if the educational goals could be achieved at less cost?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favour | ___ | (42) |
| Oppose | ___ | |
| Don't know | ___ | |

6. Would you like to see the students in the local schools be given national tests so that their educational achievement could be compared with students in othe communities?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | ___ | (43) |
| No | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

7. In some nations, the government allots a certain amount of money for each child for his education. The parents can then send the child to any public, separate, or private school they choose. This is called the "voucher system". Would you like to see such an idea adopted in this country?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Favour | ___ | (44) |
| Oppose | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

8. Suppose the local public (separate) schools said they need much more money. As you feel at this time, would you vote to raise taxes for this purpose, or would you vote against raising taxes for this programme?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| For | ___ | (45) |
| Against | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

9. It has been suggested that provincial taxes be increased for everyone in order to let the provincial government pay a greater share of school expenses and to reduce local property taxes. Would you favour an increase in provincial taxes so that real estate taxes could be lowered on local property?

For ___ (46)
Against ___
No opinion ___

10. In some schools, teachers and students have fund-raising events to finance special projects for school equipment, after-school activities and the like. Do you think it is a good idea or a poor idea for the schools to permit these events?

Good idea ___ (47)
Poor idea ___
No opinion ___

11. When some children do poorly in school, some people place the blame on the children, some on the children's home life, some on the school, and some on the teachers. Of course, all of these things share the blame, but where would you place the chief blame?

Children ___ (48)
Home Life ___
School ___
Teachers ___
No opinion ___

12. A suggestion has been made that parents of school children attend one evening class a month to find out what they can do to improve their children's behaviour and increase their interest in school work. Is it a good idea or a poor idea?

Good idea ___ (49)
Poor idea ___
No opinion ___

13. How do you feel about the discipline in the public (separate) schools? Is it too strict, not strict enough, or just about right?

Too strict ___ (50)
Not strict enough ___
Just about right ___
Don't know ___

14. If "not strict enough": Can you tell me what you mean? In what way is discipline not strict enough? Mark your choice with an X.

| | YES | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|
| a) Teachers lack authority | ___ | ___ | (51) |
| b) Students have too much freedom | ___ | ___ | (52) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| c) Disrespect for teachers | ___ | ___ | (53) |
| d) Rules are not enforced | ___ | ___ | (54) |
| e) Dress code is too liberal | ___ | ___ | (55) |
| f) Vandalism | ___ | ___ | (56) |
| g) Parents not interested in school affairs | ___ | ___ | (57) |

15. Some students are not interested in school. Often they keep other students from working in school. What should be done in these cases? Mark your choice with an X.

| | YES | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|
| a) Special classes for all who are not interested | ___ | ___ | (58) |
| b) Expell them | ___ | ___ | (59) |
| c) Offer better/more interesting curriculum/teaching methods | ___ | ___ | (60) |
| d) Special counselling | ___ | ___ | (61) |
| e) Harsher discipline | ___ | ___ | (62) |
| f) Vocational training | ___ | ___ | (63) |
| g) Make their parents responsible | ___ | ___ | (64) |
| h) Put in school for problem students | ___ | ___ | (65) |
| i) Teacher should take more interest in such students | ___ | ___ | (66) |

16. Some people say that if the schools and the teachers interest the children in learning, most disciplinary problems disappear. Do you agree?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Agree | ___ | (67) |
| Disagree | ___ | |
| No opinion | ___ | |

17. In the schools in your community, do you think too many educational changes are being tried, or not enough?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Too many | ___ | (68) |
| Not enough | ___ | |
| About right | ___ | |
| Don't know | ___ | |

18. In some schools, time spent by student in classroom is being reduced to give more time for ihdependent study, that is, carrying out learning projects on their own. Should the local schools give more time to independent study than they presently do, or should they give less time?

(69)

More ___
Less ___
About right now ___
No opinion ___

19. Some people feel that too much emphasis is placed in the high schools on preparing students for college and not enough emphasis on preparing students for occupations that do not require a college degree. Do you agree or disagree?

(70)

Agree ___
Disagree ___
No opinion ___

Please place an X beside the appropriate statement which applies to you.

Where do your children go to school:

(71)

a) No children in school ___
b) Public school ___
c) Separate school ___

Sex

(72)

a) Man ___
b) Woman ___

Religion

(73)

a) Catholic ___
b) Other ___

Age

(74)

a) 18 to 29 ___
b) 30 to 49 ___
c) 50 years and over ___

Education (last grade completed)

(75)

a) Elementary grades ___
b) High School incomplete ___
c) High School complete ___
d) Technical, Trade, or Business School ___
e) University incomplete ___
f) University graduate ___

Occupation of Chief Wage Earner

a) Business and Professional ___ (76)
b) Clerical and Sales ___
c) Farm ___
d) Skilled labour ___
e) Unskilled labour ___
f) Nonlabour force ___
g) Undesignated ___

## OPINIONNAIRE BOOKLET

### PART II

### LOT

**DIRECTIONS**

Answer the following questions with your own opinions NOT as you believe the general public would respond.

Read each of the following statements and decide how much you agree or disagree. Show your choice by placing an X before the appropiate number. Use the code below.

(1) I agree

(2) I agree a little

(3) Undecided

(4) I disagree a little

(5) I disagree

NOTE:

There are no right or wrong answers.

There is no time limit.

Answer all items.

Mark only one choice for each item.

1) Most interesting, exciting pastimes involve much cost for the right kind of equipment. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (77)

2) Being part of a new struggling enterprise is more satisfying than working with a well-established organization. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (78)

3) There is more pleasure in being freed from tasks by machines than in operating them. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (79)

4) Untrimmed trees in the wild state never approach the beauty or symmetry of those properly cultivated. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (80)

5) The old values of thrift, order, sacrifice and being on time are still the way to success. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (81)

6) Postponement of marriage or the raising of children until one can enjoy material possessions such as cars or houses is desirable. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (82)

7) Being alone in a large, unfamiliar city causes one to feel small or insignificant. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (83)

8) Although modern art does not show things as they exist, it has a hidden, attractive quality. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (84)

9) One of the delights of life is the excitement gained from not knowing about tomorrow. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (85)

10) Persons carless in personal appearance should be required to model after those who dress with style and care. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (86)

11) A well-run organization is under the direction of a man who defines work-roles exactly. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (87)

12) The world problems of over-population, quarrels among countries and threats of war should make one hesitate to bring children into the world. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (88)

13) It is right to change laws when most people disregard them. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (89)

14) The care and concern of those professionals who help in time of bereavement or loss is praiseworthy. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (90)

15) Presenting a Shakespearian play with actors dressed as Eskimos instead of in regular costumes would be in poor taste. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (91)

16) Hiking or talking with friends are to be preferred to driving cars and being in competitive sports. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (92)

17) Persons who always want to change rules, or add disruptive and different ideas to a meeting should be brought into line. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (93)

18) Newspaper and news reports of multiple-murders are useful, because people will then take precautions. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (94)

19) Being free to travel and see different things is more important than using one's money to buy houses, cars, land or furniture. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (95)

20) Fortunately, group pressures can be brought to bear on young people with extreme ideas. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (96)

21) Pleasant memories of past accomplishments are better, than looking to the indefinite future. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (97)

22) Living in a comfortable manner must include some disorder, and some irregular arrangements. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (98)

23) The trend toward big-game "hunting' with cameras only may attract more people to safari expeditions. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (99)

24) Years of experience in dealing with life or work problems provide ready methods for handling most present problems. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (100)

25) Some guilt and self-disgust over past mistaken actions helps one deal with the present. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (101)

26) Being involved with the birth of new life, such as in a hospital nursery, must be an enjoyable experience. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (102)

27) Making an unfailing habit of keeping one's home and clothes in order is very desirable. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (103)

28) All too often parents don't know about or are unaware of their children's failures or shortcomings. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (104)

29) A manager must avoid any personal feelings or involvement in dealing with his workers. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (105)

30) Being always open to a change of plans or time schedules increases one's enjoyment of life. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (106)

31) Pictures of bleeding, dead or injured soldiers certainly make one fearful and wonderous about modern weapons. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (107)

32) Free interpretive dancing is generally more pleasing to watch than exact, traditional dance forms. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (108)

33) A successful person does not act without much concern and caution about what others will think. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (109)

34) The saying that, "there is nothing new under the sun," is mostly true, because little is really new. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (110)

35) There is a peace or inner serenity to be gained from attending the last rites of a departed one. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (111)

36) Self-discipline and refusal of immediate pleasures will result in gains, but hardly in a meaningful life. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (112)

37) A translation of a Shakespearian play into modern slang wording could prove interesting and give new understanding. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (113)

38) There is something overly immodest, almost indecent, about the bodily movements in modern dancing. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (114)

39) The uncertainty of the future gives sound reason for some fear. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (115)

40) It is sad, but necessary, that children be taught to face the realities of death and the cruelties of life. ___(1) ___(2) ___(3) ___(4) ___(5) (116)

# APPENDIX C

# INTERVIEWER'S MANUAL

1) Necessary Forms

Check your packet to see that you have the necessary items which are:

A) A list of addresses at which interviews are to be conducted.

B) A supply of questionnaires. One for each address plus one for you to read and familiarize yourself with.

C) A map of the city.

D) A letter of introduction.

2) Procedure

Upon completion of an interview:

A) Check off the address on your sheet of addresses.

B) Write the address on the answer sheet.

3) Returning of Assignment

When returning your materials, always include three items:

A) All questionnaires.

B) The list of addresses.

C) Maps.

4) Starting Point

Make only one interview at each address.

5) Who is Eligible to be Interviewed?

A) Age - All persons eighteen years of age or older.

B) Residence and Citizenship - Any resident is eligible, whether or not he is a citizen of this country.

C) Sex - In some households you will find more than one eligible person aged eighteen or over. Under this circumstance, use the following procedure to select the person to be interviewed:

> If there are both a man and a woman at home, attempt to have the interview with the man. If there is more than one man at home, ask to interview the youngest man aged eighteen or older.
>
> If there is more than two eligible women at home, interview the oldest woman aged eighteen or over.
>
> Naturally, if there is only one woman at home you will interview her.

6) Disabilities and Handicaps

You will encounter some people who, because of a handicap, will be difficult to interview. As a general rule, interview only those with whom an interview can be conducted with reasonable facility. Avoid interviewing the following persons:

A) Poor English Comprehension and Speech - Do not interview anyone who cannot understand or speak English.

B) Drunkenness - Avoid interviewing a person who is drunk. Remember, a person who has had a couple of drinks is usually not drunk and is suitable for an interview.

C) Mental Disorder and Senility - Avoid interviewing those who exhibit symptoms of severe mental incapacity.

D) Deafness, Dumbness, Blindness - Interview only those with whom communication is possible.

7) Hours of Interviewing

Interview only after 4:00 p.m. and stop by 9:30 p.m. on weekdays--Monday through Friday--and anytime on Saturday and Sunday. This rule is absolute and should not be deviated from. Failure to follow it will result in your going to many homes when no one is home to be interviewed.

8) Break-Off

When a person refuses to complete an interview, this is called a "break-off". In this case, destroy the partially completed questionnaire as it has no value to the study. Make a note of this on your address list.

9) Refusal

The interviewer who approaches an interview expecting to get an interview, usually does. If a person refuses to be interviewed, note this on your address list and seek another interview.

10) Telephone Interviews

All interviews should be conducted in households in a face-to-

face fashion. No telephone interviews should be conducted.

11) Preparing for the Interview

A) Check to make sure you have all the necessary materials including something to write with.

B) Run a trial interview with a member of your family.

C) Select an appropriate time for interviewing.

D) Do not carry too many materials so that you look like a salesman.

E) Do not hesitate, move with confidence and decisiveness.

12) Introduction

Following these suggestions will facilitate a person to carry out an interview in a smooth fashion:

A) Introduce yourself.

B) Introduce the reason for your visit. Mention the letter which was mailed to the household at an earlier date.

C) Remember - most people enjoy being interviewed and are interested in educational issues.

D) Every answer the respondent gives is right. Do not give him the impression that you are testing his intelligence or his knowledge.

13) Rules for Using a Questionnaire

Do not change the questionnaire in any way.

A) Do not permit the respondent to skip any questions. Advise him that it is important to this study that no questions be omitted.

B) If a person refuses to answer a question, write across the answer space "refusal".

14) Impartiality

As an interviewer your job is to obtain a measure of public opinion. Therefore, you must maintain an attitude of impartiality before and during the interview.

John Brosseau

Project Director

Phone: 434 9325

# APPENDIX D

BIOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

IN SAMPLE ONE

| Characteristic | Percent |
|---|---|
| **Where do your children go to school?** | |
| a) Public School | 36 |
| b) Catholic School | 16 |
| c) No children in school | 48 |
| **Sex** | |
| a) Male | 50 |
| b) Female | 48 |
| c) No response | 2 |
| **Religion** | |
| a) Catholic | 27 |
| b) Other | 73 |
| **Age** | |
| a) 18 - 29 years | 24 |
| b) 30 - 49 years | 45 |
| c) 50 years and over | 29 |
| d) No response | 2 |
| **Education (last grade completed)** | |
| a) Elementary grades | 11 |
| b) High School incomplete | 25 |
| c) High School complete | 29 |
| d) Technical, Trade, or Business School | 11 |
| e) University incomplete | 10 |
| f) University graduate | 13 |
| g) No response | 1 |
| **Occupation of Chief Wage Earner** | |
| a) Business and Professional | 43 |
| b) Clerical and Sales | 12 |
| c) Farm | 0 |

Appendix D (Continued)

| Characteristic | Percent |
|---|---|
| d) Skilled labour | 24 |
| e) Unskilled labour | 1 |
| f) Non-labour force | 3 |
| g) Undesignated | 16 |
| h) No response | 1 |

# APPENDIX E

CORRELATIONS OF BIOGRAPHICAL DATA, LOT SCORE,
AND PUBLIC OPINION SCORE

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) Children in School | 1.000 | -0.241 | 0.046 | 0.408 | -0.091 | 0.117 | -0.059 | 0.029 |
| 2) Sex | | 1.000 | -0.012 | -0.227 | -0.291 | 0.294 | 0.093 | 0.019 |
| 3) Religion | | | 1.000 | 0.093 | -0.064 | 0.079 | -0.007 | -0.074 |
| 4) Age | | | | 1.000 | -0.050 | -0.009 | 0.022 | 0.027 |
| 5) Education | | | | | 1.000 | -0.599 | -0.053 | -0.100 |
| 6) Occupational level | | | | | | 1.000 | 0.060 | 0.030 |
| 7) LOT Score | | | | | | | 1.000 | -0.062 |
| 8) Public Opinion Score | | | | | | | | 1.000 |